HUGH STEPHENS LIBRARY 3530
BS551 .H8 1920
Hurlbut's story of the Bible;self-prouno
3 7000 0008 1126 2

STEPHENS COLLEGE

DISCARD

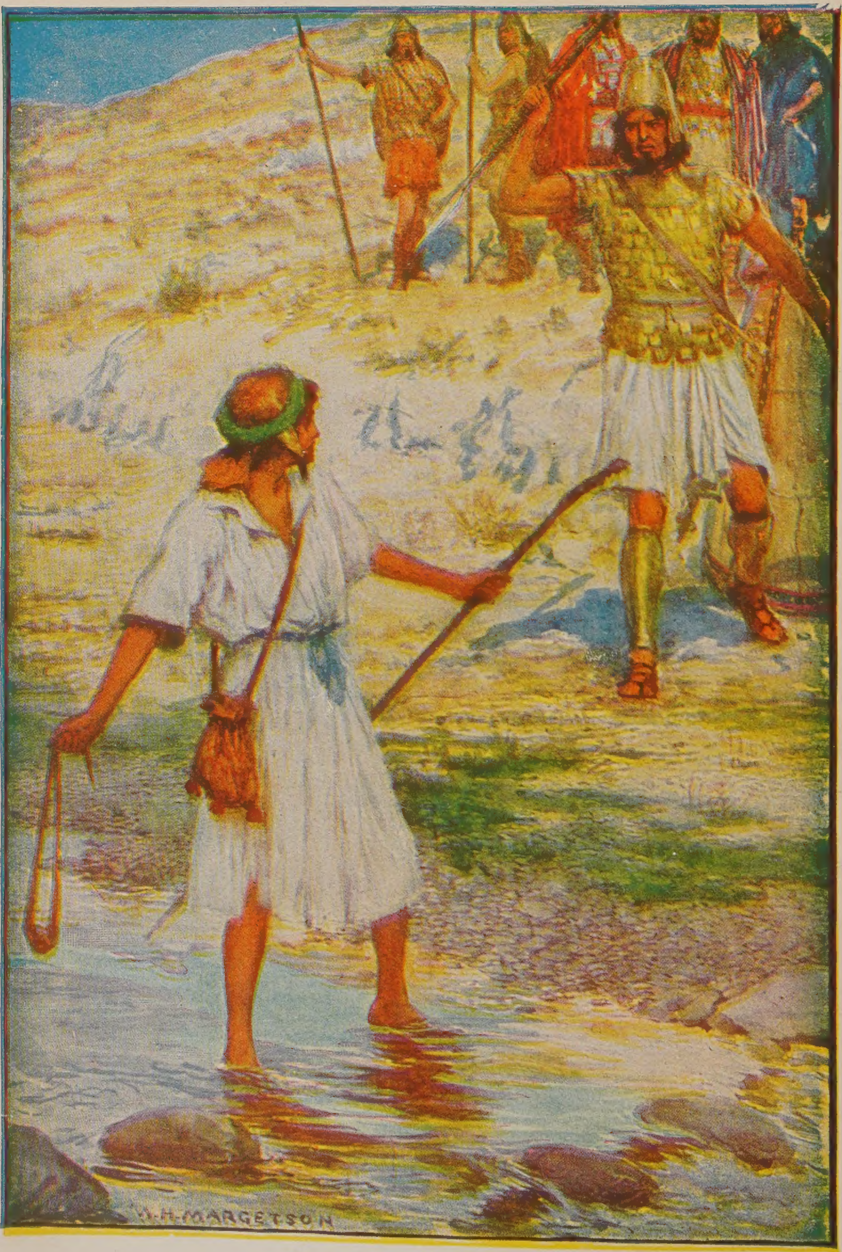
CLASS [redacted]

BOOK [redacted]

LIBRARY

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.


W. H. MARGETSON

DAVID MEETING GOLIATH

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

HURLBUT'S
Story of the Bible

SELF-PRONOUNCING 795

The Complete Bible Story, running from
Genesis to Revelation, Told in the
Simple Language of To-day for
YOUNG AND OLD

One Hundred and Sixty-eight Stories

Each Complete in Itself, and Together Forming
a Connected Narrative of the
Holy Scripture

By **REV. JESSE LYMAN HURLBUT, D.D.**
Author of "Revised Normal Lessons," "Studies in Old Testament
History," "Studies in the Four Gospels," "From Saul
to Solomon," etc., etc.

Profusely Illustrated
WITH COLOR PLATES AND HALF-TONE ENGRAVINGS

PHILADELPHIA
THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS IN THE YEAR 1904 BY W. E. SCULL, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

New Edition From New Plates

Having sold over 200,000 copies of this work and finding an ever-increasing demand for it, the publishers have reset the entire book, incorporating the PRONOUNCING FEATURE so popular in the "International Bible Series."

To the Young People of America

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED, IN
THE HOPE THAT IT MAY INTEREST
THEM IN THE READING OF
THE BEST OF ALL BOOKS

INTRODUCTION.

THE PURPOSE AND PLAN OF THIS BOOK.

SOME years ago, the editor of an English magazine sent a communication to "the hundred greatest men in Great Britain" asking them this question: "If for any reason you were to spend a year absolutely alone, in a prison for instance, and could select from your library three volumes to be taken with you as companions in your period of retirement, please to inform us what those three books would be." The inquiry was sent to peers of the realm, prominent leaders in politics, judges, authors, manufacturers, merchants, gentlemen of leisure—men who would represent every aspect of successful life. In the answers it was found that ninety-eight of the hundred men named "The Bible" first on the list of the three books to be chosen.

The Most Popular Book in the World.

If from the middle class of society, instead of the highest, another hundred names were taken at random, requiring only character and not greatness, the proportion of those who would name the Bible as the most desirable book in all literature would be almost, perhaps quite, as large. And if one should ask the same question of a hundred moral, honest people in the lower walks of life—workingmen and housewives in humble homes—the answer from the largest number would still be "The Bible." There is no other book in all the world which commands annually a circulation of ten million copies, in order to supply the demand for it in every land and in every language. Choose if you please the new novel that last year sold the largest number of copies, and you will find during the same year more than ten times the number of Bibles were sold. And three years from now, when the new novel will be old, forgotten, and no longer in demand, there will again be ten million Bibles in three hundred and twenty-five languages printed and bound and sold in a year!

To Tell a Story One Must Know it.

A book which stands in such honor as the Bible no one can afford to neglect. It is everywhere quoted, referred to, written about, preached from, and every one who would be considered as intelligent must have some acquaintance with it. Those who in early life learn the Story of the Bible are fortunate, for they will never forget it. Wise parents tell the Stories of the Bible to their children, and both parents and children find them the most fascinating of all stories. "David and Goliath" is more interesting than "Jack, the Giant Killer;" "Joseph and His Brothers" will compare favorably with "Whittington, Lord Mayor of London;" the battles of Joshua and David are as wonderful as those of "King Arthur and the Table Round." The Bible is a veritable "Arabian Nights" of entertainment when parents are themselves familiar with the stories and know how to tell them. No book is so delightful to children, as well as to those of larger growth, as the Bible.

But the parents or others who are not thoroughly informed, or who do not possess the great gift of story-telling, find difficulties in the path of teaching the contents of the Bible to their children. Here is a great Book with masses of matter interesting only to students, as history, enealogy, details of law and customs of worship, psalms, rophecies, proverbs, epistles—how shall a selection be made ppropriate to childhood? There are Oriental forms of peech, antiquated, unfamiliar, sometimes unacceptable to he taste of the age. The Stories of the Bible must be chosen with care, some statements must be explained, and some llusions must be omitted.

Moreover the "Story of the Bible" is of great value and nterest to older readers. The stories have deeper meanings and a spiritual significance that the child does not comprehend. These come home to the adult, and with added force f he realizes that these are the stories which he heard at his mother's knee. While if read for the first time, they are beautiful as literature, interesting as stories, and of the greatest value in touching the heart and awakening the conscience. In these days we are coming to realize more and more that men and women need the Bible as an intimate companion in their daily lives. By putting it in attractive, readable and interesting form this need may be more easily met, and it is hoped, many brought to know its contents who have been unfamiliar with the beauties of "The Book of Books."

What we Aim to Do in this Book.

The writer of this work has been for many years a Bible student, a Bible teacher and a helper through the press, of many who are instructing the young in the Bible. He has long felt the need of a Book of Bible Stories, different in some respects from any work that has yet appeared. With this conviction he has undertaken the preparation of this work, which after patient labor and many revisions is now submitted to the public. In its purpose and plan its distinguishing features are the following:

1. The aim has been not merely to make a selection of the most striking and interesting among the stories contained in the Bible, but to tell all the principal stories in their connected order, and in such relation with each other as to form a continuous history. Whoever reads this book will find in it not only "Stories from the Bible," but also the "Story of the Bible" in one narration. He will follow the current of Scripture history and biography.

2. This Bible Story, though continuous and connected, is arranged in the form of a series of Stories, each independent of all the others and treated separately. Every Story has its title; and an effort has been made to give to each a striking title, one that will arrest the attention of the reader whether old or young. A child or a parent who might hesitate in undertaking to read through the history in the Bible, may open almost at random and find a Story. Here are one hundred and sixty-eight Stories, each one complete in itself, while together combining to form one narrative. And with each Story is named the place where it may be found in the Bible.

One Story out of many Stories.

3. Special care has been given to the language of this book. I have endeavored to make it plain without making it childish. Every word has been carefully chosen and there are few words in these Stories which a child of ten years old will not readily understand. Whenever it has been found necessary to introduce any word outside the realm of childhood, as "altar," "offering," "tabernacle," "synagogue," "centurion," etc., it is carefully explained, not once only, but a number of times, until it becomes familiar. Doctrinal and technical terms have been everywhere excluded, and in place of them plain, familiar words have been given.

4. Inasmuch as the book is designed to lead the reader to the Bible itself, and not away from it, the language of the Bible, or a language somewhat like that of the Bible, has been employed. For the same reason I have refrained from adding to the Bible record any imaginary scenes or incidents or conversations. I wish every one who reads or who hears this book read to feel instinctively that it is the Bible, and not a fairy-tale, to which he is listening. The Bible stories are made plain, but they are not rewritten or changed.

The Bible Story and That Only.

5. In my opinion many books containing stories from the Bible are greatly marred by the evident attempt to interject a body of divinity into them, to make them teach doctrines which may be right or may be wrong, but are not stated nor hinted in the Scripture stories. Some excellent works have occupied much space here and there in trying to connect with Bible stories the deepest and most mysterious doctrines, which theologians find hard to understand. Others contain many moral reflections and applications which may be useful, but are not contained in the text of the story. I have sought to explain what needs explanation, but to avoid all doctrinal bias, and not to be wise above what is written. Only in a few instances where the New Testament warrants a spiritual interpretation of the Old Testament story has an application been given, and then in the simplest and fewest words. It is my confident hope that all denominations of Christians may feel at home in the pages of this book.

6. In the management of the material, the paragraphs are short, and according to the modern manner the conversations are generally printed in separate paragraphs. The results of recent knowledge in Bible lands and Bible his-

tory are used as far as is suitable, in a book of this kind. Where the Revised Version is a manifest improvement upon the Old Version, it has been followed, as bringing the reader a step nearer to the thought of the Biblical writers.

A Book of Pictures.

7. Many of the engravings have been designed expressly for this book, and both the subjects for illustrations and the pictures themselves have been prepared with great care. The publishers have not allowed, in the book, scenes of blood or such as would be repulsive to people of taste. There is a realism in some modern views of Oriental manners and customs, which may be accurate, but is not pleasing and does not promote reverence. We have sought for pictures representing action and life, rather than those of ruined cities and squalid modern villages which may represent the Holy Land of to-day, but give no conception of the country and its people in Bible times. The pictures and the stories with them are designed to make the Word of God real to those who read these pages.

In the hope that this book may become an aid to parents and teachers in imparting Bible truths to young people, and with an earnest desire to increase the interest in the Sacred Narrative among readers of more mature years, these pages have been prepared and are sent forth into the world.

Jesse Lyman Hurlbut

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

PART FIRST

Stories From the First Five Books in the Bible

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY

STORY ONE — PAGE
The Story of a Beautiful Garden.... 33
Genesis i : 1, to iii : 24

STORY TWO
The First Baby in the World and His Brother.................... 38
Genesis iv : 1 to 18

STORY THREE
The Great Ship That Saved Eight People........................ 40
Genesis v : 1, to ix : 17

STORY FOUR
The Tower that was Never Finished 47
Genesis xi : 1, to xi : 9

STORY FIVE
The Story of a Long Journey........ 50
Genesis xi : 27, to xiii : 18

STORY SIX
How Lot's Choice Brought Trouble and Abram's Choice Brought Blessing...................... 55
Genesis xiv : 1, to xv : 21

STORY SEVEN
The Angel by the Well.............. 59
Genesis xvi : 1, to xvii : 27

STORY EIGHT — PAGE
The Rain of Fire that Fell on a City 61
Genesis xviii : 1, to xix : 30

STORY NINE
The Boy who Became an Archer..... 65
Genesis xxi : 1 to 21

STORY TEN
How an Angel's Voice Saved a Boy's Life........................... 68
Genesis xxii : 1, to xxiii : 20

STORY ELEVEN
The Story of a Journey after a Wife 72
Genesis xxiv : 1, to xxv : 18

STORY TWELVE
How Jacob Stole His Brother's Blessing...................... 76
Genesis xxv : 27, to xxvii : 46

STORY THIRTEEN
Jacob's Wonderful Dream.......... 83
Genesis xxvii : 46, to xxx : 24

STORY FOURTEEN
A Midnight Wrestling Match........ 86
Genesis xxx : 25, to xxxiii : 20

STORY FIFTEEN PAGE
The Rich Man's Son Who was Sold as a Slave.................... 90
Genesis xxxvii : 1 to 36

STORY SIXTEEN
From the Prison to the Palace....... 95
Genesis xl : 1, to xli : 44

STORY SEVENTEEN
How Joseph's Dream Came True... 102
Genesis xli : 46, to xlii : 38

STORY EIGHTEEN
A Lost Brother Found.............. 106
Genesis xliii : 1, to xlv : 24

STORY NINETEEN
From the Land of Famine to the Land of Plenty................ 112
Genesis xlv : 25, to l : 26

STORY TWENTY
The Beautiful Baby Who was Found in a River.................... 116
Exodus i : 1, to ii : 22

STORY TWENTY-ONE
The Voice from the Burning Bush 121
Exodus iii : 1, to iv : 31

STORY TWENTY-TWO
The River That Ran Blood.......... 126
Exodus vi : 28, to x : 29

STORY TWENTY-THREE
The Night When a Nation was Born 130
Exodus xi : 1, to xiii : 22

STORY TWENTY-FOUR
How the Sea Became Dry Land and the Sky Rained Bread.......... 134
Exodus xiv : 1, to xvi : 36

STORY TWENTY-FIVE
The Mountain That Smoked and the Words That were Spoken from It........................ 139
Exodus xvii : 1, to xxxi : 18

STORY TWENTY-SIX PAGE
How Aaron Made a Golden Calf and What Became of It............ 143
Exodus xxxii : 1, to xxxiv : 35

STORY TWENTY-SEVEN
The Tent Where God Lived Among His People.................... 147
Exodus xxxv : 1, to xl : 38

STORY TWENTY-EIGHT
How They Worshipped God in the Tabernacle.................... 152
Leviticus i : 1 to 13; viii : 1 to 13 ; Exodus xxvii : 20, 21

STORY TWENTY-NINE
What Strong Drink Brought to Aaron's Sons................. 156
Leviticus x : 1 to 11

STORY THIRTY
The Scapegoat in the Wilderness.... 158
Leviticus xvi : 1 to 34

STORY THIRTY-ONE
The Cluster of Grapes from the Land of Canaan................... 161
Numbers xiii : 1, to xiv : 45

STORY THIRTY-TWO
How the Long Journey of the Israelites Came to an End........... 165
Numbers xx : 1, to xxii : 1

STORY THIRTY-THREE
What a Wise Man Learned from an Ass.......................... 169
Numbers xxii : 2, to xxv : 18; xxxi : 1 to 9

STORY THIRTY-FOUR
How Moses Looked upon the Promised Land...................... 176
Numbers xxvi : 1 to 4, 63 to 65; xxxii : 1 to 42; Deuteronomy xxxi : 1, to xxxiv : 12

STORY THIRTY-FIVE
The Story of Job.................. 180
Job i : 1, to ii :13 ; xlii : 1 to 17

PART SECOND

Stories of Joshua and the Judges

JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
I SAMUEL i : to x

STORY ONE PAGE
The Story of a Scarlet Cord.......187
Joshua i : 1, to ii : 24

STORY TWO
How the River Jordan Became Dry, and the Walls of Jericho Fell Down.................... 190
Joshua iii : 1, to vi : 27

STORY THREE
The Story of a Wedge of Gold 195
Joshua vii : 1, to viii : 35

STORY FOUR
How Joshua Conquered the Land of Canaan........................ 198
Joshua ix : 1, to xi : 23

STORY FIVE
The Old Man Who Fought Against the Giants.................... 202
Joshua xiv : 1, to xix : 51

STORY SIX
The Avenger of Blood and the Cities of Refuge............... 205
Joshua xx : 1, to xxi : 45

STORY SEVEN
The Story of an Altar Beside the River........................ 209
Joshua xxii : 1, to xxiv : 33

STORY EIGHT
The Present That Ehud Brought to King Eglon.................... 212
Judges i : 1, to iii : 31

STORY NINE
How a Woman Won a Great Victory.. 215
Judges iv : 1, to v : 31

STORY TEN PAGE
Gideon and His Brave Three Hundred.......................... 220
Judges vi : 1, to viii : 28

STORY ELEVEN
Jephthah's Rash Promise and What Came from it................. 228
Judges viii : 33, to xi : 40

STORY TWELVE
The Strong Man: How He Lived and How He Died................. 232
Judges xiii : 1, to xvi : 31

STORY THIRTEEN
The Idol Temple at Dan and Its Priest......................... 241
Judges xvii : 1, to xviii : 31

STORY FOURTEEN
How Ruth Gleaned in the Field of Boaz.......................... 245
Ruth i : 1, to iv : 22

STORY FIFTEEN
The Little Boy with a Linen Coat.... 250
I Samuel i : 1, to iii : 21

STORY SIXTEEN
How the Idol Fell down before the Ark.......................... 254
1 Samuel iv : 1, to vii : 1

STORY SEVENTEEN
The Last of the Judges............. 257
I Samuel vii : 2 to 17

STORY EIGHTEEN
The Tall Man Who was Chosen King 260
I Samuel viii : 1, to x : 27

PART THIRD

Stories of the Three Great Kings of Israel

SAUL, DAVID AND SOLOMON

I SAMUEL xi : 1, to xxxi : 13 I KINGS i : 1, to ix : 43
II SAMUEL I CHRONICLES xiii :1, to xxix : 30
II CHRONICLES i : to 1, to ix : 31

PAGE

STORY ONE

How Saul Saved the Eyes of the Men of Jabesh 267
I Samuel xi : 1, to xii : 25

STORY TWO

The Brave Young Prince 270
I Samuel xiii : 1, to xiv : 46

STORY THREE

Saul's Great Sin and His Great Loss 274
I Samuel xv : 1 to 35

STORY FOUR

The Shepherd Boy of Bethlehem.... 277
I Samuel xvi : 1 to 23

STORY FIVE

The Shepherd Boy's Fight with the Giant........................ 282
I Samuel xvii : 1 to 54

STORY SIX

The Little Boy Looking for the Arrows......................... 286
I Samuel xvii : 55, to xx : 42

STORY SEVEN

Where David Found the Giant's Sword......................... 293
I Samuel xxi : 1, to xxii : 23

STORY EIGHT

How David Spared Saul's Life...... 297
I Samuel xxiii : 1, to xxvii : 12

PAGE

STORY NINE

The Last Days of King Saul........ 300
I Samuel xxviii : 1, to xxxi : 13

STORY TEN

The Shepherd Boy Becomes a King. 306
II Samuel i : 1, to iv : 12

STORY ELEVEN

The Sound in the Treetops......... 309
II Samuel v : 1, to vii : 29

STORY TWELVE

The Cripple at the King's Table.... 313
II Samuel viii : 1, to ix : 13

STORY THIRTEEN

The Prophet's Story of the Little Lamb......................... 316
II Samuel xi : 1 to 25; Psalm 51

STORY FOURTEEN

David's Handsome Son and How He Stole the Kingdom........ 320
II Samuel xiii : 1, to xvii : 23

STORY FIFTEEN

Absalom in the Wood; David on the Throne...................... 327
II Samuel xvii : 24, to xx : 26

STORY SIXTEEN

The Angel with the Drawn Sword on Mount Moriah............. 334
II Samuel xxiv : 1 to 25;
I Chronicles xxi : 1 to 27 ... 180
17

STORY SEVENTEEN PAGE

olomon on His Father's Throne.... 337
I Kings i : 1 to 53

STORY EIGHTEEN

he Wise Young King.............. 340
I Kings iii : 1, to iv : 34; II Chronicles i : 1 to 13

STORY NINETEEN PAGE

The House of God on Mount Moriah 343
I Kings v : 1, to ix : 9; II Chronicles iii : 1, to vii : 22

STORY TWENTY

The Last Days of Solomon's Reign... 346
I Kings x : 1, to xi : 43

PART FOURTH

Stories of the Kingdom of Israel

From I KINGS xii: I, to II KINGS xvi: 41

STORY ONE PAGE

he Breaking Up of a Great Kingdom......................... 353
I Kings xii : 1 to 24; II Chronicles x : 1 to 19

STORY TWO

he King Who Led Israel to Sin, and the Prophet Who was Slain by a Lion......................... 356
I Kings xii : 25, to xiv : 20; xv : 25 to 32

STORY THREE

he Prophet Whose Prayer Raised a Boy to Life.................... 362
I Kings xv : 33, to xvii : 24

STORY FOUR

he Prayer that was Answered in Fire......................... 367
I Kings xviii : 1 to 46

STORY FIVE

he Voice That Spoke to Elijah in the Mount......................... 372
I Kings xix : 1 to 21

STORY SIX

How Wounded Prophet and His 376
I Kings xx : 1 to 43

STORY SEVEN PAGE

What Ahab Paid for His Vineyard... 378
I Kings xxi : 1 to 29

STORY EIGHT

The Arrow that Killed a King....... 381
I Kings xxii : 1 to 40

STORY NINE

Elijah's Chariot of Fire............. 384
II Kings i : 1, to ii : 15

STORY TEN

A Spring Sweetened by Salt; and Water That Looked Like Blood.. 387
II Kings ii : 19, to iii : 27

STORY ELEVEN

The Pot of Oil and the Pot of Poison 390
II Kings iv : 1 to 7; iv : 38 to 44; vi : 1 to 7

STORY TWELVE

The Little Boy at Shunem.......... 392
II Kings iv : 8 to 37

STORY THIRTEEN

How a Little Girl Helped to Cure a Leper......................... 395
II Kings v : 1 to 27

STORY FOURTEEN PAGE
The Chariots of Fire around Elisha.. 399
II Kings vi : 8 to 23

STORY FIFTEEN
What the Lepers found in the Camp 401
II Kings vi : 24, to vii : 20

STORY SIXTEEN
Jehu, the Furious Driver of His Chariot.................. 404
II Kings viii : 7 to 15; ix : 1, to x : 36

STORY SEVENTEEN PAGE
Elisha and the Bow; Jonah and Nineveh...................... 411
II Kings xiii : 1 to 25;
Jonah i : 1, to iv :

STORY EIGHTEEN
How the Ten Tribes were Lost...... 416
II Kings xv : 8, to xvii : 41

PART FIFTH

Stories of the People and Kingdom of Judah

From II CHRONICLES xii : 1, to the End of the Old Testament

STORY ONE PAGE
The First Four Kings of Judah...... 421
II Chronicles xii : 1, to xx : 37

STORY TWO
The Little Boy who was Crowned King.......................... 426
II Chronicles xxi : 1, to xxiv : 27

STORY THREE
Three Kings and a Great Prophet... 430
II Chronicles xxv : 1, to xxviii : 27;
Isaiah vi : 1 to 13

STORY FOUR
The Good King Hezekiah........... 436
II Kings xviii : 1, to xx : 21;
II Chronicles xxix : 1, to xxxii : 33; Isaiah xxxvi : 1, to xxxviii: 22

STORY FIVE
The Lost Book Found in the Temple 441
II Kings xxi : 1, to xxiii : 25;
II Chronicles xxxiii : 1, to xxxv : 27

STORY SIX PAGE
The Last Four Kings of Judah and the Weeping Prophet........... 445
II Kings xxiii : 31, to xxv : 22;
II Chronicles xxxvi : 1 to 21;
Jeremiah xxii : 10 to 12; xxiv : 1 to 10; xxix : 1 to 29; xxxvi : 1, to xliii : 13

STORY SEVEN
What Ezekiel Saw in the Valley..... 451
Ezekiel xxxvii

STORY EIGHT
The Jewish Captives in the Court of the King...................... 454
Daniel i : 1, to ii : 49

STORY NINE
The Golden Image and the Fiery Furnace...................... 459
Daniel iii : 1 to 30

STORY TEN
The Tree That was Cut down and Grew Again.................. 462
Daniel iv : 1 to 37

STORY ELEVEN PAGE
he Writing Upon the Wall........ 465
Daniel v : 1 to 31

STORY TWELVE
aniel in the Den of Lions.......... 469
Daniel vi : 1 to 28

STORY THIRTEEN
he Story of a Joyous Journey...... 473
Ezra i : 1, to iii : 7

STORY FOURTEEN
he New Temple on Mount Moriah.. 477
Ezra iii : 8, to vi : 22; Haggai i : 1, to ii : 23; Zechariah iv : 6 to 10

STORY FIFTEEN PAGE
The Beautiful Queen of Persia...... 481
Esther i : 1, to x : 3

STORY SIXTEEN
The Scribe Who Wrote the Old Testament.................... 491
Ezra vii : 1, to x : 44

STORY SEVENTEEN
The Nobleman Who Built the Wall of Jerusalem.................. 495
Nehemiah i : 1, to vii : 73

STORY EIGHTEEN
Ezra's Great Bible Class in Jerusalem........................... 500
Nehemiah viii : 1, to xiii : 31; Malachi i : 1, to iv : 6

PART SIXTH

The Story of Jesus

As Found in the Gospels

MATTHEW
MARK
LUKE
JOHN

STORY ONE PAGE
he Angel by the Altar............. 505
Luke i : 1 to 80

STORY TWO
he Manger of Bethlehem.......... 510
Matth. i : 18 to 25; Luke ii : 1 to 39

STORY THREE
he Star and the Wise Men........ 514
Matth. ii : 1 to 23

STORY FOUR
he Boy in his Father's House...... 518
Luke ii : 40 to 52

STORY FIVE PAGE
The Prophet in the Wilderness...... 522
Matth. iii : 1 to 17; Mark i : 1 to 11; Luke iii : 1 to 23

STORY SIX
Jesus in the Desert, and beside the River......................... 525
Matth. iv : 1 to 11; Mark i : 12 to 13; Luke iv : 1 to 13; John i : 29 to 51

STORY SEVEN
The Water Jars at the Wedding Feast.......................... 530
John ii : 1, to ii : 21

STORY EIGHT PAGE

The Stranger at the Well 534
Matth. xiv : 3 to 5; Mark vi : 17 to 20; Luke iii : 19, 20; John iii : 22; iv : 42

STORY NINE

The Story of a Boy in Capernaum, and of a Riot in Nazareth 538
John iv : 46 to 54; Luke iv : 16 to 31

STORY TEN

A Net Full of Fishes 542
Matth. iv : 18 to 22; Mark i : 16 to 34; Luke iv : 33, to v : 11

STORY ELEVEN

The Leper and the Man Let Down Through the Roof 546
Matth. viii : 2 to 4; ix : 2 to 8; Mark i : 40 to 45; ii : 1 to 12; Luke v : 12 to 26

STORY TWELVE

The Cripple at the Pool and the Withered Hand in the Synagogue 550
Matth. xii : 1 to 14; Mark ii : 23, to iii : 6; Luke vi : 1 to 11; John v : 1 to 18

STORY THIRTEEN

The Twelve Disciples and the Sermon on the Mount 554
Matth. ix : 9 to 13; Chapters v to viii; Mark ii : 13 to 17; Luke v : 27 to 32; vi : 12 to 49

STORY FOURTEEN

The Captain's Servant, the Widow's Son, and the Woman who was a Sinner 559
Matth. viii : 5 to 13; Luke vii : 1 to 17; 36 to 50

STORY FIFTEEN PAGE

Some Stories that Jesus Told by the Sea 564
Matth. xiii : 1 to 53; Mark iv : 1 to 34; Luke viii : 4 to 18

STORY SIXTEEN

" Peace, Be Still " 568
Matth. viii : 18 to 34; Mark iv : 35, to v : 21; Luke viii : 22 to 40

STORY SEVENTEEN

The Little Girl Who was Raised to Life 570
Matth. ix : 18 to 38; x : 1 to 42; Mark v : 22 to 43; Luke viii : 41 to 56; ix : 1 to 5

STORY EIGHTEEN

A Dancing Girl and What was Given Her 575
Matth. xi : 2 to 19; xiv : 1 to 12; Mark vi : 14 to 29; Luke vii : 18 to 35

STORY NINETEEN

The Feast Beside the Sea, and What Followed It 578
Matth. xiv : 13 to 36; Mark vi : 30 to 56; Luke ix : 10 to 17; John vi : 1 to 71

STORY TWENTY

The Answer to a Mother's Prayer . . . 583
Matth. xv : 21 to 39; Mark vii : 24 to viii : 26

STORY TWENTY-ONE

The Glory of Jesus on the Mountain 586
Matth. xvi : 13, to xvii : 23; Mark viii : 27, to ix : 32; Luke ix : 18 to 45

STORY TWENTY-TWO

PAGE
he Little Child in the Arms of Jesus 591
Matth. xvii : 24, to xviii : 35; Mark ix : 33 to 48; Luke ix : 46 to 50

STORY TWENTY-THREE

t the Feast of Tabernacles.......... 594
Matth. viii : 19 to 22; Luke ix : 57 to 62; x : 38 to 42; xvii : 11 to 19; John vii : 2 to 52

STORY TWENTY-FOUR

he Man with Clay on His Face...... 597
John ix : 1 to 41

STORY TWENTY-FIVE

he Good Shepherd and the Good Samaritan.................. 600
John x : 1 to 41; Luke x : 1 to 37

STORY TWENTY-SIX

azarus Raised to Life............. 603
John xi : 1 to 55

STORY TWENTY-SEVEN

ome Parables in Perea............ 607
Luke xii : 1, to xv : 32

STORY TWENTY-EIGHT

he Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man.................... 613
Luke xvi : 1 to 31; xviii : 1 to 34; Matth. xix : 13 to 30; xx : 17 to 19; Mark x : 13 to 34

STORY TWENTY-NINE

esus at Jericho........................ 618
Matth. xx : 20 to 34; Mark x : 35 to 52; Luke xviii : 35, to xix : 28

STORY THIRTY

alm Sunday........................ 623
Matth. xxi : 1 to 11; xxvi : 6 to 16; Mark xi : 1 to 11; xiv : 3 to 11; Luke xix : 29 to 41; xxii : 3 to 6; John xii : 1 to 19

STORY THIRTY-ONE

PAGE
The Last Visits of Jesus to the Temple........................... 626
Matth. xxi : 18, to xxiii : 39; Mark xi : 12, to xii : 44; Luke xix : 45, to xxi : 4

STORY THIRTY-TWO

The Parables on the Mount of Olives 632
Matth. xxiv : 1, to xxv : 46; Mark xiii : 1, to 37; Luke xxi : 5 to 38

STORY THIRTY-THREE

The Last Supper................... 636
Matth. xxvi : 17 to 35; Mark xiv : 12 to 31; Luke xxii : 7 to 38; John xiii : 1, to xvii : 26

STORY THIRTY-FOUR

The Olive Orchard and the High-Priest's Hall.................. 641
Matt. xxvi : 36 to 75 ; Mark xiv : 32 to 72; Luke xxii : 40 to 62; John xviii : 1 to 27

STORY THIRTY-FIVE

The Crown of Thorns.............. 646
Matth. xxvi : 57, to xxvii : 26; Mark xv : 1 to 15; Luke xxii : 66, to xxiii : 25; John xviii : 19, to xix : 16

STORY THIRTY-SIX

The Darkest Day of All the World... 652
Matth. xxvii : 31 to 66; Mark xv : 20 to 47; Luke xxiii : 26 to 56; John xix : 16 to 42

STORY THIRTY-SEVEN

The Brightest Day of All the World.. 658
Matth. xxviii : 1 to 10; Mark xvi : 1 to 13; Luke xxiv : 1 to 49; John xx : 1 to 23

STORY THIRTY-EIGHT

The Stranger on the Shore.......... 664
Matth. xxviii : 16 to 20; Mark xvi : 14 to 20; Luke xxiv : 50 to 53; John xx : 26, to xxi : 25; Acts i : 1 to 11; I Cor. xv : 3 to 8

PART SEVENTH

Stories of the Early Church

As Found in the Acts of the Apostles and Book of Revelation

STORY ONE PAGE
The Church of the First Days....... 673
Acts i : 12, to ii : 47

STORY TWO
The Man at the Beautiful Gate...... 675
Acts iii : 1, to iv : 31

STORY THREE
The Right Way to Give, and the Wrong Way.................... 679
Acts iv : 32, to v : 42

STORY FOUR
Stephen With the Shining Face..... 683
Acts vi : 1, to viii : 3

STORY FIVE
The Man Reading in the Chariot.... 686
Acts viii : 4 to 40

STORY SIX
The Voice that Spoke to Saul....... 689
Acts ix : 1 to 31; Acts xxii : 1 to 21; Galatians i : 11 to 24.

STORY SEVEN
What Peter Saw by the Sea......... 695
Acts ix : 32, to xi : 18

STORY EIGHT
How the Iron Gate was Opened..... 700
Acts xii : 1 to 24

STORY NINE
The Earliest Missionaries........... 703
Acts xi : 19 to 30; xiii : 1, to xiv : 28

STORY TEN
The Song in the Prison............. 708
Acts xv : 1, to xvi : 40

STORY ELEVEN PAGE
Paul's Speech on the Hill........... 713
Acts xvii : 1 to 34

STORY TWELVE
Paul at Corinth..................... 716
Acts xviii : 1 to 22

STORY THIRTEEN
Paul at Ephesus.................. 719
Acts xviii : 23, to xx : 1

STORY FOURTEEN
Paul's Last Journey to Jerusalem ... 723
Acts xx : 2, to xxi : 16

STORY FIFTEEN
The Speech on the Stairs........... 726
Acts xxi : 17, to xxii : 29

STORY SIXTEEN
Two Years in Prison............... 730
Acts xxii : 30, to xxiv : 27

STORY SEVENTEEN
The Story that Paul told to the King 734
Acts xxv : 1, to xxvi : 32

STORY EIGHTEEN
Paul in the Storm.................. 738
Acts xxvii : 1, to xxviii : 1

STORY NINETEEN
How Paul Came to Rome and How He Lived There............... 742
Acts xxviii : 2 to 31

STORY TWENTY
The Throne of God................ 746
Revelation i : 9 to 20; iv : 1, to v : 14

STORY TWENTY-ONE
The City of God..................... 748
Revelation vii : 9 to 17; xxi : 1 to 27; xxii : 1 to 17

List of Illustrations

List of Illustrations

PAGE
dam and Eve in the Garden of Eden 35
dam and Eve Sent Out Into the World 36
ain Kills His Brother Abel 39
oah's Offering After the Flood Full Page 41
he Dove Came Back to the Ark . . . 43
he Dove Returned Not Again 45
he People Were Scattered from Tower of Babel 48
Native of Egypt and His Water Bottle 51
he Sphinx and Pyramid in Egypt . . 53
he Dead Sea Near Where Stood Sodom and Gomorrah 56
braham Meets King Melchizedek . . 57
agar by the Spring of Water 60
odom and Gomorrah Burned Up . . . 63
agar Goes Into the Wilderness 66
agar and Her Little Boy in the Desert 67
Abraham! Abraham!" 70
braham's Servant Meeting Rebekah at the Well 73
braham's Servant Shows the Presents 74
e Gave Her Gold Bracelets and a Gold Ring 75
sau was Fond of Hunting 77
sau Selling His Birthright for a Meal 79
saac Blesses Jacob 80
acob's Wonderful Dream 84
acob and the Angel 88
achel's Tomb 90

PAGE
Joseph Telling His Dreams to His Brothers . . . . . . Full Page 91
Joseph Sold by His Brothers 93
A Great Temple in Egypt 96
Joseph Before Pharaoh 99
Joseph Telling Pharaoh the Meaning of His Dream . . . . . . Full Page 101
Plowing in Bible Time 103
Benjamin is Brought to Joseph Full Page 107
The Cup was Found in the Sack of Benjamin 110
Joseph Brings Jacob to Pharaoh 113
The Tomb of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob 115
The Baby in the Ark Floats Down the River 117
The Princess Finds the Baby 119
Moses Drove Off the Rough Men 120
Moses Sees the Bush on Fire . . . . . . Full Page 123
Pharaoh's Own Son Lay Dead . . . . . . Full Page 131
The Egyptians Were Drowned in the Sea 135
Moses Strikes the Rock 140
Moses Brings the Tables of Stone . . . 145
The Tabernacle in the Wilderness . . . 148
The High-Priest, and the Holy Ark . . 151
The Hight-Priest 154
The Golden Candlestick 155
The Brazen Altar 157
The Scapegoat 159
Moses Comes Down from Mt. Sinai with Tables of Stone 160
The Two Young Men Carried a Cluster of Grapes Between Them . . 162

PAGE
Miriam Singing the Song Moses Wrote........................ 166
The Angel Meets Balaam in the Way........................ 172
Moses Looks Upon the Promised Land........................ 177
Moses' Hands Upheld.............. 179
The Well of Job.................. 181
Three Friends Come to See Job..... 183
The Two Spies Let Down by a Rope 189
The Priests Blowing Their Horns.... 192
Jericho As It Now Is.............. 197
The Gibeonites Come to Joshua..... 199
The Mosque of Omar, or the Dome of the Rock..................... 203
The Ark with the Golden Cherubim 207
The Altar Which Stood as a Witness 211
Barak Sees the Mighty Sisera....... 217
The Angel Touched Gideon's Offering 221
The Angel Speaking to Gideon..... 223
Jephthah's Daughter and Her Young Friends.................Full Page 229
Jepthah Mourning for His Daughter 230
Jephthah Offers Up His Daughter 231
Delilah Tries to Learn from Samson the Secret of His Strength........ Full Page 233
Young Samson Slays the Lion...... 234
Samson Pulling Down the Temple... 239
A Harvest Field in the Time of the Judges........................ 243
Orpah Leaves Naomi.............. 246
Ruth Gleaning in the Field of Boaz Full Page 247
Ruth will Not Leave Naomi........ 249
Hannah Brings Her Boy to Eli...... 251
The Boy Who Lived in the Temple. Full Page 253
"The Tomb of the Judges"......... 258
Samuel Anoints Saul King.......... 262
A Company of Prophets Meet Saul.. 264
A Messenger Brings Saul Sad News.. 268
"You Have Not Kept God's Command"........................ 271
Samuel Turns Away from Saul...... 275
PAGE
The Boy David Meeting the Lion... 278
David Plays Before Saul........... 280
David Running to Meet Goliath.... 284
David Brought with the Giant's Head Before Saul.................... 287
Saul Throws His Spear at David.... 288
The Women Meeting David with Dancing and Singing............ 289
Jonathan Shoots the Arrow......... 291
David took the Giant's Sword...... 294
The Water from the Well of Bethlehem........................ 295
David Spares Saul's Life........... 299
The Death of Saul................. 301
Saul Asks the Woman to Call up Samuel........................ 303
Women Grinding Grain in Bible Times........................ 305
Hebron, Where David Went........ 308
The Wall of Jerusalem as it now is 310
Mephibosheth, Jonathan's Son, Before David..................... 314
The Prophet Nathan Reproves David 317
David Sends for Absalom and Kisses Him........................ 321
The Brook Kedron................ 323
Absalom Fleeing Through the Forest 328
Absalom's Pillar.................. 331
David Gets the Threshing-Floor..... 335
The Tomb of David as Shown Today in Jerusalem................ 339
The Wise Decision of the Young King Solomon.................. 341
Benaiah, the Brave Commander of Solomon's Guard................ 342
Solomon Builds the Temple......... 345
The Queen of Sheba Comes to See Solomon.................Full Page 347
Rehoboam Spoke Harshly to the People........................ 354
The Wife of Jeroboam and the Blind Prophet ....Full Page 357
A Lion Came Out and Killed the Prophet...................... 36

PAGE

Elijah Was Fed by the Birds ... Full Page 363

Elijah Brings the Boy to His Mother 365

Mount Carmel ... 368

Elijah's Sacrifice on Mt. Carmel ... 371

An Angel Touched Elijah ... 373

Elijah Places His Mantel on Elisha ... 375

The Prophet Makes Himself Known to the King ... 377

Ahab and Naboth ... 379

Elijah Meets King Ahab at the Gate 381

Elijah Strikes the Water With His Mantle ... 385

Elisha's Fountain ... 389

Elisha Lays His Face on the Child's Face ... 393

The Slave Girl and Naaman's Wife ... 396

The Lepers Visit a Tent of the Syrians 402

Jehu Driving His Chariot to Meet King Jehoram ... Full Page 405

Jezebel Calls from the Window to Jehu ... Full Page 409

Jonah Thrown Overboard by the Sailors ... 413

Jonah and His Gourd ... 414

The Prophet Jeremiah When Jerusalem was Taken ... Full Page 418

The Valley of Jehoshaphat ... 423

The Priests Teach the People ... 425

The Little Joash is Crowned King ... 427

Uzziah is Smitten with Leprosy ... 431

The High-Priest Offers Sacrifice in the Temple ... 433

Pool of Hezekiah at Jerusalem ... 437

The Shadow on the Dial Goes Back 439

The Words of the Law are Read Before the King ... 443

Jeremiah Warns the People of Judah 447

Jeremiah Tells the King He Shall Be Taken Captive ... 449

The Captives in Babylon ... 453

The Four Young Men Before the King ... 455

PAGE

The Three Young Jews Were not Afraid of the King ... 461

Nebuchadnezzar's Reason Leaves Him ... 463

Belshazzar Gives a Great Feast in Honor of His God ... 466

The Fall of Babylon ... 467

Daniel in the Den of Lions ... 470

Daniel Answers the King ... 471

A Distant View of Jerusalem ... 475

Jerusalem of To-Day ... 479

Queen Esther Coming to the King Full Page 483

Esther Points to Haman as Her Enemy ... 485

Mordecai Does not Kneel Before Haman ... Full Page 487

Haman begs for His Life from Esther 489

Nehemiah, the Cup-Bearer, Before the King and Queen ... 497

Ezra's Great Bible Class ... 501

Elizabeth Greets Mary ... 507

The Well of the Virgin Mary, at Nazareth ... 509

Jesus in the Manger with Angels Looking On ... 511

The Baby Jesus Brought to the Temple ... 513

Strange Men Come to See the Newly-Born King ... 515

The Flight into Egypt ... 517

The Boy Jesus in the Temple ... Full Page 519

Nazareth ... 520

Jesus as a Boy ... 521

John the Baptist in the Wilderness 523

Jesus Teaching by the Sea of Galilee ... 527

Jesus Makes Peter and Andrew His Disciples ... 528

Jesus at the Wedding Feast ... 531

Jesus Drives out the Buyers and Sellers ... 532

The Woman of Samaria Sees Jesus at the Well ... 535

PAGE
The Well of the Wise Men Near Bethlehem........ 539
Jacob's Well as it is Now........ 541
Jesus Calls James and John........ 543
The Nets Were Filled with Fishes... 544
Jesus Teaching at Nazareth........ 545
The Man Let Down Through the Roof........ 547
Jesus Hears the Mother's Prayer.... 549
Jesus Heals the Cripple at the Pool.. 551
Jesus and His Disciples in the Field of Grain........ 553
Jesus Calls Matthew........ 555
A Centurion Comes to Jesus........ 560
The Woman Washing the Feet of Jesus........Full Page 561
The Sower........ 565
Jesus Asleep in the Boat........ 569
Jesus Raising Jairus' Daughter to Life........Full Page 571
The Woman Touching the Hem of Jesus' Robe........ 572
Jesus Healing the Sick........ 574
Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee........ 577
Jesus Blesses the Food........ 580
"Be of Good Cheer, It is I"........ 581
The Gentile Woman Seeks Jesus for Help........ 584
Jesus and His Disciples on Mount Hermon........ 588
Jesus Takes a Little Child in His Arms........ 592
Jesus at the Home of Mary and Martha........ 595
The Pool of Siloam as seen To-Day 598
The Good Shepherd........ 602
Lazarus Comes to Life Again........ 604
The Shepherd Goes After the Lost Sheep........ 608
The Lost Piece of Silver........ 609
The Father Fell on His Son's Neck.. 611
The Unjust Steward........ 614
The Pharisee and the Publican........ 616
Blind Bartimæus........ 619

PAGE
Jesus on the Mount of Olives........Full Page 621
Jesus Rides into Jerusalem........ 624
Jesus Drives Out the Traders........ 628
Jesus and the Piece of Money........ 629
The Poor Widow Drops in Two Little Coins........ 631
The Coming of the Bridegroom..... 633
They Took the Unfaithful Servant Away........
Christ Washing Peter's Feet........Full Page 639
Jesus Finds His Disciples Asleep.... 643
Peter Went Out and Wept Bitterly.. 645
Jesus Brought Before Pilate........ 647
"Look On This Man"........ 649
Judas Bringing Back the Money to the Priests........Full Page 651
Jesus Led Away to the Cross........ 654
The Women See the Angel at the Tomb of Jesus........Full Page 657
The Guards of the Tomb Fall to the Earth........ 659
The Risen Christ Blessing His Disciples........Full Page 663
Thomas Answered "My Lord and My God"........ 665
The Risen Christ on the Shore........Full Page 667
Jesus Talks With Two of His Followers........Full Page 669
The Net Full........ 670
Peter and John Before the Rulers... 677
Joppa........ 678
Death of Ananias........ 681
Stephen Fell Asleep........ 684
Saul Hears a Strange Voice........ 691
The Wall Where Saul Was Let Down........ 693
Damascus........ 694
Tarsus........ 694
Dorcas Helping the Poor........ 697
Lydda As Seen To-Day........ 699
An Angel Enters the Prison Cell.....701
Elymas Struck Blind........ 705
Antioch in Syria........ 706

PAGE
Paul and Barnabas Refuse the Sacrifice........................ 707
Philippi........................ 711
Rome........................ 712
Paul Preaching on Mars' Hill....... 715
Corinth........................ 717

PAGE
Ephesus........................ 722
A Heathen Temple................ 732
Paul Before Agrippa............... 735
The Apostle Paul in the Storm...... Full Page 741
John on the Isle of Patmos......... 749

Illustrations in Color

FACING PAGE

DAVID MEETING GOLIATH.......*Frontispiece*

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC ON MOUNT MORIAH....... 68

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WORKING FOR THE EGYPTIANS....... 126

MOSES POINTING TO THE SERPENT OF BRASS....... 139

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL BOWING BEFORE THE GOLDEN CALF....... 144

SHEPHERDS CROSSING THE RIVER JORDAN WITH THEIR SHEEP....... 240

ELIJAH AND HIS SERVANT ON MOUNT CARMEL....... 376

KING JOASH SHOOTING THE ARROW....... 412

KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR LOOKING INTO THE FIERY FURNACE....... 460

THE ANGEL SPEAKING TO MARY....... 508

THE GOOD SAMARITAN AIDING THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN ROBBED....... 600

JUDAS KISSES JESUS IN THE GARDEN....... 640

MARY MAGDALENE MEETING THE RISEN JESUS....... 658

PETER AND JOHN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE....... 676

THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER IN JOPPA AS IT NOW IS....... 696

PAUL IN THE STORM AT SEA....... 736

Part First

Stories from the First Five Books in the Bible

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

Story One

THE STORY OF A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN

Genesis i : 1, to iii : 24.

THIS great round world, on which we live, is very old; so old that no one knows when it was made. But long before there was any earth, or sun, or stars, God was living, for God never began to be. He always was. And long, long ago, God spoke, and the earth and the heavens came. But the earth was not beautiful as it is now, with mountains and valleys, rivers and seas, with trees and flowers. It was a great smoking ball, with land and water mingled in one mass. And all the earth was blacker than midnight, for there was no light upon it. No man could have breathed its air, no animals could walk upon it, and no fish could swim in its black oceans. There was no life upon the earth.

While all was dark upon earth, God said, "Let there be light," and then the light began to come upon the world. Part of the time it was light, and part of the time it was dark, just as it is now. And God called the dark time Night, and the light time Day. And that was the first day upon this earth after a long night.

Then at God's word, the dark clouds all around the earth began to break, and the sky came in sight, and the water that was in the clouds began to be separate from the water that was on the earth. And the arch of the sky which was over the earth God called Heaven. Thus the night and the morning made a second day.

Then God said, "Let the water on the earth come together in one place, and let the dry land rise up." And so it was. The water that had been all over the world came together, and formed a great ocean, and the dry land rose up from it. And the great water God called Sea, and the dry land he named Earth: and God saw that the Earth and the Sea were both good. Then God said, "Let grass and trees, and flowers, and fruits, grow on the earth." And at once the earth began to be green and bright with grass, and flowers, and trees bearing fruit. This made the third day upon the earth.

Then God said, "Let the sun, and moon, and stars come into sight from the earth." So the sun began to shine by day, and the moon and the stars began to shine in the night. And this was done on the fourth day.

And God said, "Let there be fishes in the sea, and let there be birds to fly in the air." So the fishes, great ones and small, began to swim in the sea; and the birds began to fly in the air over the earth, just as they do now. And this was the fifth day.

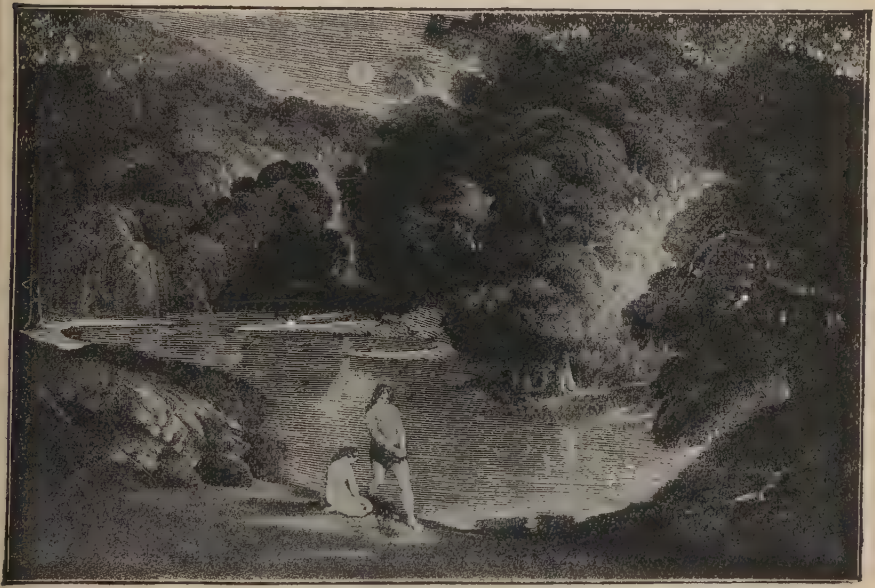
Then God said, "Let the animals come upon the earth, great animals and small ones; those that walk and those that creep and crawl on the earth." And the woods and the fields began to be alive with animals of all kinds. And now the earth began to be more beautiful, with its green fields and bright flowers, and singing birds in the trees, and animals of every kind walking in the forests.

But there were no people in the world—no cities nor houses, and no children playing under the trees. The world was all ready for men and women to enjoy it: and so God said, "I will make man, to be different from all other animals. He shall stand up and shall have a soul, and shall be like God; and he shall be the master of the earth and all that is upon it."

So God took some of the dust that was on the ground, and out of it he made man; and God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became alive, and stood up on the earth.

And so that the man whom God had made might have a home, God planted a beautiful garden on the earth, at a place where four rivers met. Perhaps we might rather call it a park, for it was much larger than any garden that you have ever seen, for it was miles and miles in every direction. In this garden, or park, God planted trees, and caused grass to grow, and made flowers to bloom. This was called "The Garden of Ē′dĕn," and as in one of the languages of the Bible the word that means "garden," or "park," is a word quite like the word "Paradise," this Garden of Ē′dĕn has often been called "Paradise." This garden God gave to the man that he had made; and told him to care for it, and to gather the fruits upon the trees and the plants, and to live upon them. And God gave to the first man the name Ăd′ăm: and God brought to Ăd′am the animals that he had made, and let Ăd′am give to each one its name.

But Ăd′ăm was all alone in this beautiful garden. And God said, "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make some one to be with Ăd′ăm, and to help him." So when Ăd′ăm was asleep, God took a rib from Ăd′ăm's side, and from it God made a woman; and he brought her to Ăd′ăm, and Ăd′ăm called her Ēve. And Ăd′ăm and Ēve loved one another; and they were happy in the beautiful garden which God had given them for a home.



Ăd′ăm and Ēve in the garden of Ē′dĕn.

Thus in six days the Lord God made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them. And on the seventh day God rested from his work.

For a time, we do not know how long, Ăd′ăm and Ēve were at peace in their beautiful garden. They did just as God told them to do, and talked with God as a man would talk with his friend; and they did not know of anything evil or wicked. It was needful for Ăd′ăm and Ēve to understand that they must always obey God's commands. So God said to Ăd′ăm and Ēve:

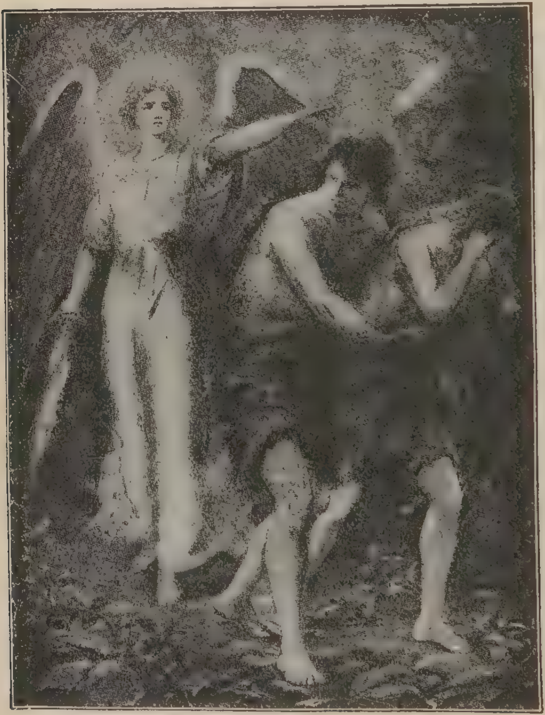
"You may eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden except one. In the middle of the garden grows a tree, with fruit upon it that you must not eat and you must not touch. If you eat of the fruit upon that tree, you shall die."

Now among the animals in the garden there was a snake: and this snake said to Ēve, "Has God told you that there is any kind of fruit in the garden, of which you are forbidden to eat?"

And Ēve answered the snake, "We can eat the fruit of all the trees except the one that stands in the middle of the garden. If we eat the fruit of that tree, God says that we must die."

Then the snake said, "No, you will not surely die. God knows that if you eat of the fruit of that tree, you will become as wise as God himself, for you will know what is good and what is evil."

Ēve listened to the snake, and then she looked at the tree and its fruit. As she saw it, she thought that it would taste good; and if it would really make one wise, she would like to eat it, even though God had told her not to do so. She took the fruit, and ate it; and then she gave some to Ad'ăm, and he too ate it.



ĂD'ĂM AND ĒVE SENT OUT INTO THE WORLD.

Ad'ăm and Ēve knew that they had done wrong in not obeying God's words: and now for the first time they were afraid to meet God. They tried to hide themselves from God's sight among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called and said, "Ad′ăm, where are you?" And Ad′ăm said, "Lord, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, and I hid myself."

And God said, "Why were you afraid to meet me? Have you eaten the fruit of the tree of which I told you that you must not touch it?" And Ad′ăm said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me some of the fruit, and I ate it."

Then God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" And Ēve said, "The snake told me that it would do me no harm if I should eat the fruit, and so I took some of it and ate it."

Then the Lord God said to the snake, "Because you have led Ad′ăm and Ēve to do wrong, you shall no more walk as do other animals; you shall crawl in the dust and the dirt forever. You shall hate the woman, and the woman shall hate you. You shall try to kill her and her children, and her children's children forever, and they shall try to kill you."

And the Lord God said to the woman, "Because you led your husband to disobey me, you shall suffer and have pain and trouble all the days of your life."

And God said to Ad′ăm, "Because you listened to your wife when she told you to do what was wrong, you too must suffer. You must work for everything that you get from the ground. You will find thorns and thistles and weeds growing on the earth. If you want food, you must dig and plant and reap and work, as long as you live. You came out from the ground, for you were made of dust, and back again into the dust shall your body go when you die."

And because Ad′ăm and Ēve had disobeyed the word of the Lord, they were driven out of the beautiful Garden of Ē′dĕn, which God had made to be their home. They were sent out into the world; and to keep them from going back into the garden, God placed his angels before its gate, with swords which flashed like fire.

So Ad′ăm and his wife lost their garden, and no man has ever been able to go into it from that day.

Story Two

THE FIRST BABY IN THE WORLD, AND HIS BROTHER

Genesis iv : 1 to 18.

SO Ad′ăm and his wife went out into the world to live and to work. For a time they were all alone, but after a while God gave them a little child of their own, the first baby that ever came into the world. Ēve named him Cāin; and after a time another baby came, whom she named Ā′bĕl.

When the two boys grew up, they worked, as their father worked before them. Cāin chose to work in the fields, and to raise grain and fruits. Ā′bĕl had a flock of sheep and became a shepherd.

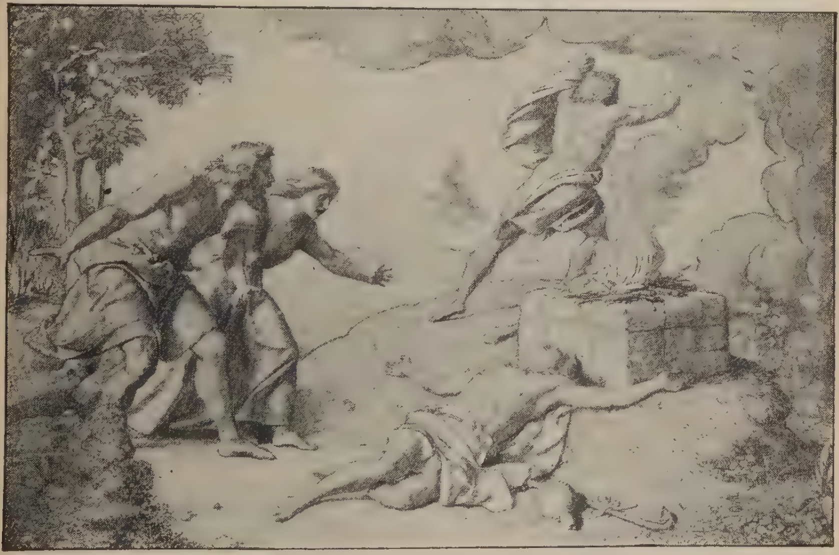
While Ad′ăm and Ēve were living in the Garden of Ē′dĕn, they could talk with God, and hear God's voice speaking to them. But now that they were out in the world, they could no longer talk with God freely, as before. So when they came to God, they built an altar of stones heaped up, and upon it they laid something as a gift to God, and burned it, to show that it was not their own, but was given to God, whom they could not see. Then before the altar they made their prayer to God, and asked God to forgive their sins, all that they had done that was wrong; and prayed God to bless them and do good to them.

Each of these brothers, Cāin and Ā′bĕl, offered upon the altar to God his own gift. Cāin brought the fruits and the grain which he had grown; and Ā′bĕl brought a sheep from his flock, and killed it and burned it upon the altar. For some reason God was pleased with Ā′bĕl and his offering, but was not pleased with Cāin and his offering. Perhaps God wished Cāin to offer something that had life, as Ā′bĕl offered; perhaps Cāin's heart was not right when he came before God.

And God showed that he was not pleased with Cāin, and Cāin, instead of being sorry for his sin, and asking God to forgive him, was very angry with God, and angry also toward his brother Ā'bĕl. When they were out in the field together, Cāin struck his brother Ā'bĕl and killed him. So the first baby in the world grew up to be the murderer of his own brother.

And the Lord said to Cāin, "Where is Ā'bĕl your brother?"

And Cāin answered, "I do not know; why should I take care of my brother?"



CĀIN KILLS HIS BROTHER Ā'BĔL.

Then the Lord said to Cāin, "What is this that you have done? Your brother's blood is like a voice crying to me from the ground. Do you see how the ground has opened, like a mouth, to drink your brother's blood? As long as you live, you shall be under God's curse for the murder of your brother. You shall wander over the earth, and shall never find a home, because you have done this wicked deed."

And Cāin said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Thou hast driven me out from among men; and thou hast hid thy face from me. If any man finds me he will kill me, because I shall be alone, and no one will be my friend."

And God said to Cāin, "If any one harms Cāin, he shall be punished for it." And the Lord God placed a mark on Cāin, so that whoever met him should know him, and should know also that God had forbidden any man to harm him. Then Cāin and his wife went away from Ad′ăm's home, to live in a place by themselves, and there they had children. And Cāin's family built a city in that land; and Cāin named the city after his first child, whom he had called Ē′nŏch.

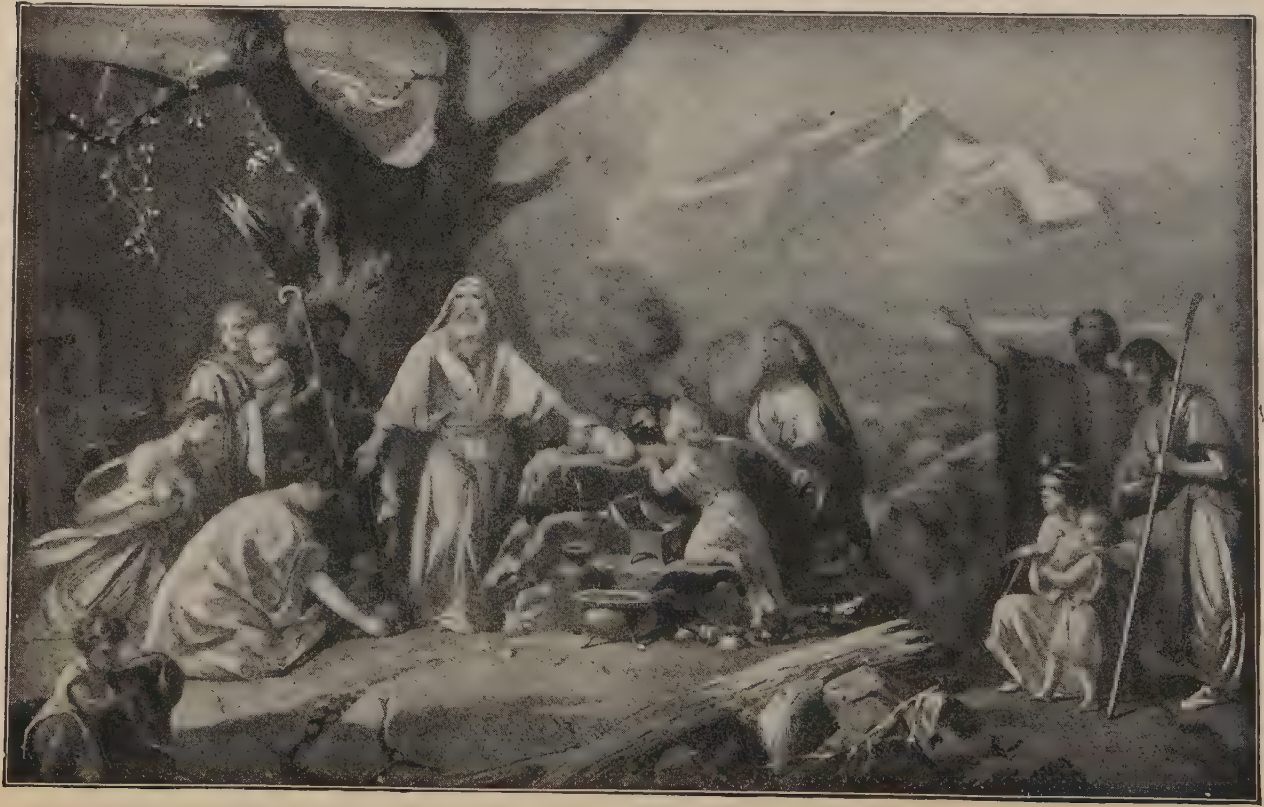
Story Three

THE GREAT SHIP THAT SAVED EIGHT PEOPLE

Genesis v : 1, to ix : 17.

AFTER Ā′bĕl was slain, and his brother Cāin had gone into another land, again God gave a child to Ad′ăm and Ēve. This child they named Sĕth; and other sons and daughters were given to them, for Ad′ăm and Ēve lived many years. But at last they died, as God had said that they must die, because they had eaten of the tree that God had forbidden them to eat.

By the time that Ad′ăm died, there were many people on the earth; for the children of Ad′ăm and Ēve had many other children; and when these grew up, they also had children; and these too had children. And in those early times people lived much longer than they do now. Very few people now live to be a hundred years old; but in those days, when the earth was new, men often lived to be eight hundred or even nine hundred years old. So after a time that part of the earth where Ad′ăm's sons lived began to be full of people.



NŌ'AH'S OFFERING AFTER THE FLOOD.

It is sad to tell that as time went on more and more of these people became wicked, and fewer and fewer of them grew up to become good men and women. All the people lived near together, and few went away to other lands; so it came to pass that even the children of good men and women learned to be bad, like the people around them.

And as God looked down on the world that he had made, he saw how wicked the men in it had become, and that every thought and every act of man was evil and only evil continually.

But while most of the people in the world were very wicked, there were some good people also, though they were very few. The best of all the men who lived at that time was a man whose name was Ē′nŏch. He was not the son of Cāin, but another Ē′nŏch, who came from the family of Sĕth, the son of Ad′ăm who was born after the death of Ā′bĕl. While so many around Ē′nŏch were doing evil, this man did only what was right. He walked with God, and God walked with him and talked with him. And at last, when Ē′nŏch was three hundred and sixty-five years old, God took him away from the earth to heaven. He did not die, as all the people have died since Ad′ăm disobeyed God, but "he was not, for God took him." This means that Ē′nŏch was taken up from earth without dying.

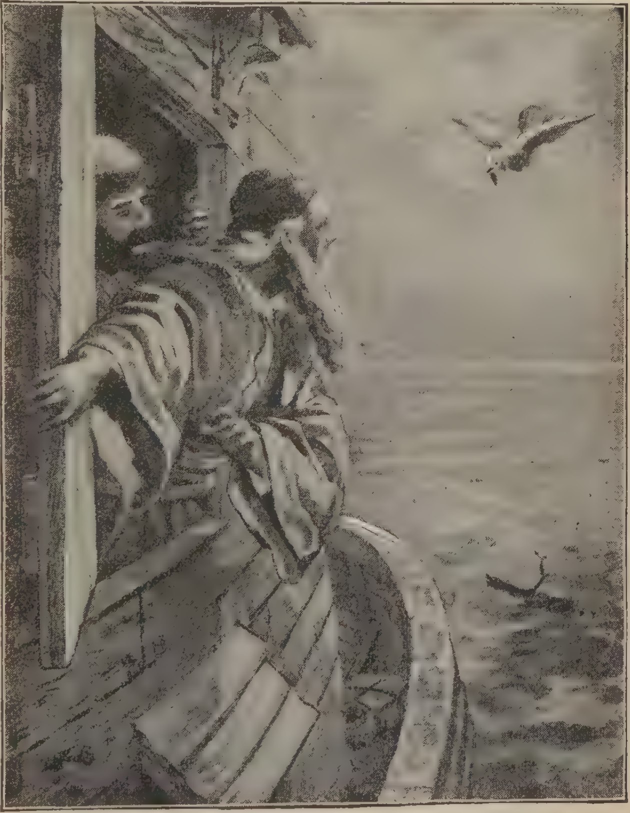
Ē′nŏch left a son whose name was Mė-thụ′se-lah. We do not know anything about Mė-thụ′se-lah, except that he lived to be nine hundred and sixty-nine years old, which was longer than the life of any other man who ever lived. But at last, Mė-thụ′se-lah died like all his people, except his father Ē′nŏch. By the time that Mė-thụ-se-lah died, the world was very wicked. And God looked down on the earth, and said:

"I will take away all men from the earth that I have made; because the men of the world are evil, and evil continually."

But even in those bad times, God saw one good man. His name was Nō′ah. Nō′ah tried to do right in the sight of God. As Ē′nōch had walked with God, so Nō′ah walked with God, and talked with him. And Nō′ah had three sons: their names were Shĕm and Hăm and Jā′pheth.

God said to Nō′ah, "The time has come when all the men and women on the earth are to be destroyed. Every one must die, because they are all wicked. But you and your family shall be saved, because you alone are trying to do right."

Then God told Nō′ah how he might save his life and the lives of his sons. He was to build a very large boat, as large as the largest ships that are made in our time; very long and very wide and very deep; with a roof over it; and made like a long wide house in three stories, but so built that it would float on the water. Such a ship as this was called "an ark." God told Nō′ah to build this ark, and to have it ready for the time when he would need it.



THE DOVE CAME BACK TO THE ARK.

"For," said God to Nō′ah, "I am going to bring a great flood of water on the earth, to cover all the land and to drown all the people on the earth. And as the animals on the earth will be drowned with the people, you must make the ark large enough to hold a pair of each kind of animals, and several pairs of some animals that are needed by men, like sheep and goats and oxen; so that there will be animals as well as men to live upon the earth after the flood has passed away. And you must take in the ark food for yourself and your family, and for all the animals with you, enough food to last for a year, while the flood shall stay on the earth."

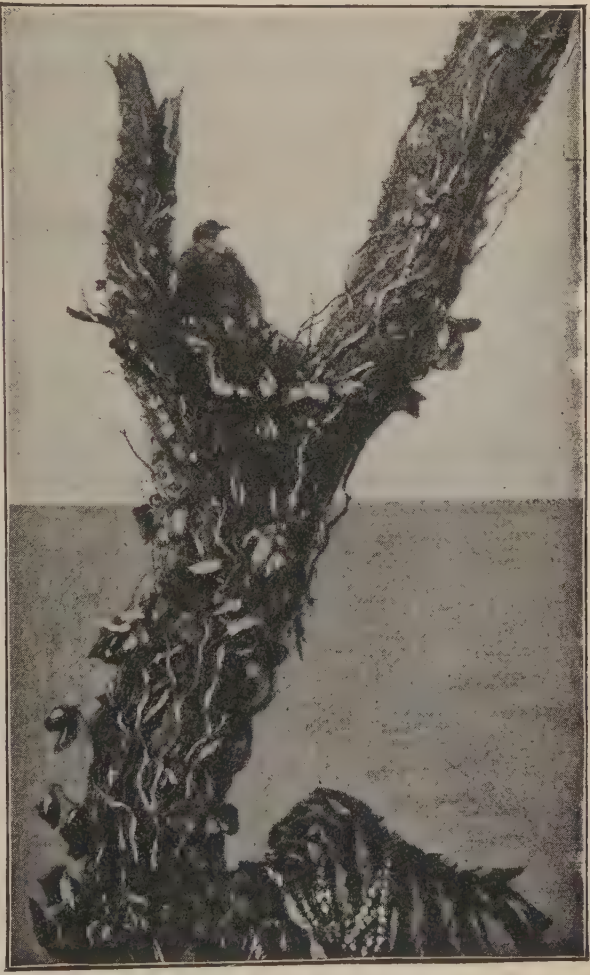
And Nō′ah did what God told him to do, although it must have seemed very strange to all the people around, to build this great ark where there was no water for it to sail upon. And it was a long time, even a hundred and twenty years, that Nō′ah and his sons were at work building the ark, while the wicked people around wondered, and no doubt laughed at Nō′ah for building a great ship where there was no sea. At last the ark was finished, and stood like a great house on the land. There was a door on one side, and a window on the roof, to let in the light. Then God said to Nō′ah, "Come into the ark, you and your wife, and your three sons, and their wives with them; for the flood of waters will come very soon. And take with you animals of all kinds, and birds, and things that creep; seven pairs of those that will be needed by men, and one pair of all the rest; so that all kinds of animals may be kept alive upon the earth."

So Nō′ah and his wife, and his three sons, Shĕm, Hăm, and Jā′pheth, with their wives, went into the ark. And God brought to the door of the ark the animals, and the birds, and the creeping things of all kinds; and they went into the ark, and Nō′ah and his sons put them in their places, and brought in food for them all. And then the door of the ark was shut, so that no more people and no more animals could come in.

In a few days the rain began to fall, as it had never rained before. It seemed as though the heavens were opened to pour great floods upon the earth. The streams filled, and the rivers rose, higher and higher, and the ark began to float on the water. The people left their houses and ran up to the hills, but soon the hills were covered, and all the people on them were drowned.

Some had climed up to the tops of higher mountains, but the water rose higher and higher, until even the mountains were covered and all the people, wicked as they had been, were drowned in the great sea that now rolled over all the earth where men had lived. And all the animals, the tame animals—cattle and sheep and oxen—were drowned; and the wild animals—lions and tigers and all the rest—were drowned also. Even the birds were drowned, for their nests in the trees were swept away, and there was no place where they could fly from the terrible storm. For forty days and nights the rain kept on, until there was no breath of life remaining outside of the ark.

After forty days the rain stopped, but the water stayed upon the earth for more than six months; and the ark, with all that were in it, floated over the great sea that covered the land. Then God sent a wind to blow over the waters and to dry them up: so by degrees the waters grew less and less. First the mountains rose above the waters, then the hills rose up; and finally the ark ceased to float, and lay aground on a mountain which is called Mount Âr′a-răt. But Nō′ah could not see what had happened on the earth, because the door was shut, and the window may have been in the roof. But he felt that the ark was no longer moving, and he knew that the water must have gone down. So, after waiting for a time, Nō′ah opened a window and let loose a bird called a raven. Now the raven has strong wings; and this raven flew round and round until the waters had gone down, and it could find a place to rest, and it did not come back to the ark.



THE DOVE RETURNED NOT AGAIN.

After Nō'ah had waited for it a while, he sent out a dove; but the dove could not find any place to rest, so it flew back to the ark, and Nō'ah took it into the ark again. Then Nō'ah waited a week longer, and afterward he sent out the dove again. And at the evening, the dove came back to the ark, which was its home; and in its bill was a fresh leaf which it had picked off from an olive tree.

So Nō'ah knew that the water had gone down enough to let the trees grow once more. He waited another week, and sent out the dove again; but this time the dove flew away and never came back. And Nō'ah knew that the earth was becoming dry again. So he took off a part of the roof and looked out, and saw that there was dry land all around the ark. Nō'ah had now lived in the ark a little more than a year, and he was glad to see the green land and the trees once more. And God said to Nō'ah:

"Come out of the ark, with your wife, and your sons, and their wives, and all the living things that are with you in the ark."

So Nō'ah opened the door of the ark, and with his family came out, and stood once more on the ground. All the animals and birds and creeping things in the ark came out also, and began again to bring life to the earth.

The first that Nō'ah did, when he came out of the ark, was to give thanks to God for saving all his family when the rest of the people on the earth were destroyed. He built an altar, and laid upon it an offering to the Lord, and gave himself and his family to God, and promised to do God's will.

And God was pleased with Nō'ah's offering, and God said:

"I will not again destroy the earth on account of men, no matter how bad they may be. From this time no flood shall again cover the earth; but the season of spring and summer and fall and winter shall remain without change. I give to you the earth; you shall be the rulers of the ground and of every living thing upon it."

Then God caused a rainbow to appear in the sky, and he told Nō'ah and his sons that whenever they or the people after them should see the rainbow, they should remember that God had placed it in the sky and over the clouds as a sign of his promise that he would always remember the earth and the people upon it, and would never again send a flood to destroy men from the earth.

So, as often as we see the beautiful rainbow, we are to remember that it is the sign of God's promise to the world.

Story Four

THE TOWER THAT WAS NEVER FINISHED

Genesis x : 1, to xi : 9.

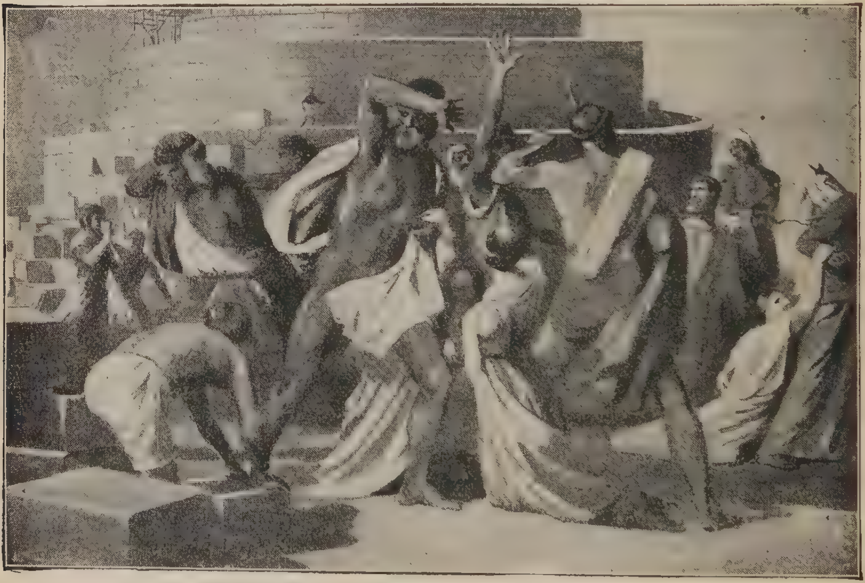
AFTER the great flood, the family of Nō′ah and those who came after him grew in number until, as the years went on, the earth began to be full of people once more. But there was one great difference between the people who had lived before the flood and those who lived after it. Before the flood, all the people stayed close together, so that very many lived in one land and no one lived in other lands. So far as we know, all the people on the earth before the great flood, lived in the lands where the two great rivers flowed, called the Tī′gris and Eū-phrā′tēş. This part of the world was very full of people; but few or none crossed the mountains on the east, or the desert on the west; and the great world beyond was without people living in it. After the flood, families began to move from one place to another, seeking for themselves new homes. Some went one way, and some another.

This moving about was a part of God's plan to have the whole earth used for the home of men, and not merely a small part of it. Then, too, a family who wished to serve God, and do right, could go away to another land if the people around them became evil; and in a place by themselves they could bring up their children in the right way.

From Mount Âr′a-răt, where the ark rested, many of the people moved southward into a country between two great rivers, the rivers Tī′gris and Eū-phrā′tēş: and there they built houses for themselves. They undertook to build a great city, which should rule all the peoples around them. They found that the soil in that country could be made into bricks, and that the bricks could be heated and made hard; so that it was easy to build houses to live in, and walls around their city to make it strong against enemies.

And the people said to each other, "Let us build a great tov that shall stand on the earth and shall reach up to the sky; so th we may be kept together, and not scattered abroad on the eart

So they began to build their great tower out of bricks, whi they piled up, one story above another. But God did not wish all the people on the earth to live close together, just as they had lived before the great flood. God knew that if they all kept together, those that were wicked would lead away from God those that were good, and all the world would become evil again, as it had been before the flood.



THE PEOPLE WERE SCATTERED FROM TOWER OF BĀ'BEL.

This was the way that God kept people from staying in one place. While they were building this great city and tower which they intended to rule the world, God caused their speech to change. At that time, all men were speaking one language, so that everybody could understand what every other person said.

God caused men to change their language, perhaps not all at once, but by degrees, little by little. After a time, the people that belonged to one family found that they could not understand what people of another family were saying, just as now Germans do t understand English, and French people cannot talk to Italians, til they have learned their different languages.

As people began to grow apart in their speech they moved away into other places, where the families speaking one language could understand each other. So the men who were building the city and the great tower could no longer understand each other's speech; they left the building without finishing it, and many of them went away into other lands. So the building stayed forever unfinished.

And the city was named Bā′bel, a word which means "confusion." It was afterward known as Băb′y̆-lon, and for a long time was one of the greatest cities of that part of the world, even after many of its people had left it to live elsewhere.

Part of the people who left Băb′y̆-lon went up to the north, and built a city called Nĭn′e-veh, which became the ruling city of a great land called Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, whose people were called Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧnş.

Another company went away to the west, and settled by the great river Nile, and founded the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, with its strange temples and pyramids, its Sphinx, and its monuments.

Another company wandered northwest until they came to the shore of the great sea which we call the Mĕd′it-er-rā-ne-an Sea. There they founded the cities of Sī′dŏn and Ty̆re, where the people were sailors, sailing to countries far away, and bringing home many things from other lands to sell to the people of Băb′y̆-lon, and Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, and Ē′ġy̆pt, and other countries.

So after the flood, the earth again became covered with people living in many lands and speaking many languages.

Story Five

THE STORY OF A LONG JOURNEY

Genesis xi : 27, to xiii : 18.

NOT far from the city of Băb′ȳ-lon, where they began to build the tower of Bā′bel, was another city, called Ûr of the Chăl′deeş. The Chăl′deeş were the people who lived in the country which was called Chăl′dea, where the two rivers Eū-phrā′tēş and Tī′gris come together. Among these people, at Ûr, was living a man named Ā′brăm. Ā′brăm was a good man, for he prayed to the Lord God, and tried always to do God's will.

But the people who lived in Ûr, Ā′brăm's home, did not pray to God. They prayed to idols, images made of wood and stone. They thought that these images were gods, and that they could hear their prayers and could help them. And as these people who worshipped idols did not call on God, they did not know his will, and they did many wicked things.

The Lord saw that Ā′brăm was good and faithful, though wicked people were living all around him. And God did not wish to have Ā′brăm's family grow up in such a place, for then they too might become wicked. So the Lord spoke to Ā′brăm, and said:

"Ā′brăm, gather together all your family and go out from this place, to a land far away, that I will show you. And in that land I will make your family to become a great people, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that all the world shall give honor to your name. If you will do as I command you, you shall be blessed, and all the families of the earth shall obtain a blessing through you."

Ā′brăm did not know just what this blessing meant that God promised to him. But we know that Ā′brăm's family grew after many years into the Ĭş′ra-el-īte people, out of whom came Jē′şus, the Saviour of the world, for Jē′şus was a descendant of Ā′brăm: that is, Jē′şus came a long time afterward from the family of which

STEPHENS COLL. COLUMBIA, MO.

Ā′brăm was the father; and thus Ā′brăm's family became a blessing to all the world by giving to the world a Saviour.

Although Ā′brăm did not know just what the blessing was to be that God promised to give him, and although he did not know where the land lay, to which God was sending him, he obeyed God's word. He took all his family, and with them his father Tē′rah, who was very old, and his wife, whose name was Sā′rāi; and his brother Nā′hôr and his wife, and another brother's son whose name was Lŏt; for Lot's father, Hā′ran, who was the younger brother of Ā′brăm, had died before this time. And Ā′brăm took all that he had, his tents, and his flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and went forth on a long journey, to a land of which he did not even know the name.

A NATIVE OF Ē′GY̆PT AND HIS WATER BOTTLE.

He journeyed far up the great river Eū-phrā′teş to the mountain region, until he came to a place called Hā′ran, in a country called Mĕs-o-pŏ-ta′mĭ-ȧ. The word Mĕs-o-pŏ-ta′mĭ-ȧ means "between the rivers"; and this country was between the two great rivers Tī′gris and Eū-phrā′teş. At Hā′ran they all stayed for a time. Perhaps they stopped there because Tē′rah, the father of Ā′brăm, was too old to travel further; for they stayed at Hā′ran until Tē′rah died.

After the death of Tē′rah, his father, Ā′brăm again went on his journey, and Lŏt, his brother's son, went with him; but Nā′hôr, Ā′brăm's brother, stayed in Hā′ran, and his family, and children, and children's children, whom they call "his descendants," lived at Hā′ran for many years.

From Hā′ran, Ā′brăm and Lŏt turned toward the southwest, and journeyed for a long time, having the mountains on their right hand and the great desert on their left. They crossed over rivers, and climbed the hills, and at last they came into the land of Cā′năan, which was the land of which God had spoken to Ā′brăm.

This land was called Cā′năan, because the people who were living in it were the descendants, or children's children, of a man who had lived long before, whose name was Cā′năan. A long time after this it was called "the Land of Ĭṣ-ra′el," from the people who lived in it; and because in that same land the Lord Jē′ṣus lived many years afterward; we now call it "The Holy Land."

When Ā′brăm came into the land of Cā′năan, he found in it a few cities and villages of the Cā′năan-ītes. But Ā′brăm and his people did not go into the towns to live. They lived in tents, out in the open fields, where they could find grass for their sheep and cattle. Not far from a city called Shē′chem, Ā′brăm set up his tent under an oak tree on the plain. There the Lord came to Ā′brăm, and said:

"I will give this land to your children, and to their children, and this shall be their land forever."

And Ā′brăm built there an altar, and made an offering, and worshipped the Lord. Wherever Ā′brăm set up his tent, there he built his altar and prayed to God; for Ā′brăm loved God, and served God, and believed God's promises.

Ā′brăm and Lŏt moved their tents and their flocks to many places, where they could find grass for their flocks and water to drink. At one time they went down to the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, where they saw the great river Nile. Perhaps they saw also the Pyramids, and the Sphinx, and the wonderful temples in that land, for many of them were built before Ā′brăm lived.

Ā′brăm did not stay long in the land of Ē′ġy̆pt. God did not wish him to live in a land where the people worshipped idols; so God sent Ā′brăm back again to the land of Cā′năan, where he could live apart from cities, and bring up his servants and his people to worship the Lord. He came to a place where afterward a city called Bĕth′el stood; and there as before he built an altar and prayed to the Lord.

Now Lŏt, the son of Ā′brăm's younger brother who had died, was with Ā′brăm; and Lŏt, like Ā′brăm, had flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and many tents for his people. Ā′brăm's shepherds and Lŏt's shepherds quarreled, because there was not grass enough in one place for both of them to feed their flocks; and besides these people, the Cā′năan-ītes were also in the land, so that there was not room for them all.

THE SPHINX AND PYRAMID IN Ē′ĠȲPT.

When Ā′brăm heard of the quarrel between his men and the men under Lŏt, he said to Lŏt:

"Let there be no quarrel between you and me, nor between your men and my men; for you and I are like brothers to each other. The whole land is before us; let us go apart. You shall have the first choice, too. If you will take the land on the right hand, then I will take the land on the left; or if you choose the left hand, then I will take the right."

This was noble and generous in Ā'brăm, for he was the older, and might claim the first choice. Then, too, God had promised all the land to Ā'brăm, so that he might have said to Lŏt, "Go away, for this land is all mine." But Ā'brăm showed a kind, good heart in giving to Lŏt his choice of the land.

And Lŏt looked over the land from the mountain where they were standing, and saw down in the valley the river Jôr'dan flowing between green fields, where the soil was rich. He saw the cities of Sŏd'om and Gō-mŏr'rah upon the plain, near the head of the Dead Sea, into which the Jôr'dan flows. And Lŏt said, "I, will go down yonder to the plain."

And he went down the mountain to the plain, with his tents and his men, and his flocks of sheep and his cattle, leaving the land on the mountains, which was not so good, to his uncle Ā'brăm. Perhaps Lŏt did not know that the people in Sŏd'om were the most wicked of all the people in the land; but he went to live near them, and gradually moved his tent closer to Sŏd'om, until after a time he was living in that wicked city.

After Lŏt had separated from Ā'brăm, God said to Ā'brăm:

"Lift up your eyes from this place, and look east and west, and north and south. All the land that you can see, mountains and valleys and plains, I will give it to you, and to your children, and their children, and those who come after them. Your descendants shall have all this land, and they shall be as many as the dust of the earth; so that if one could count the dust of the earth, they could as easily count those who shall come from you. Rise up, and walk through the land wherever you please, for it is all yours."

Then Ā'brăm moved his tent from Bĕth'-el, and went to live near the city of Hē'bron, in the south, under an oak tree; and there again he built an altar to the Lord.

Story Six

HOW LOT'S CHOICE BROUGHT TROUBLE AND ABRAM'S CHOICE BROUGHT BLESSING

Genesis xiv : 1, to xv : 21.

SO Lŏt lived in Sŏd′om, and Ā′brăm lived in his tent on the mountains of Cā′năan. At that time in the plain of Jôr′dan, near the head of the Dead Sea, were five cities, of which Sŏd′om and Gȯ-mŏr′rah were two; and each of the five cities was ruled by its own king. But over all these little kings and their little kingdoms was a greater king, who lived far away, near the land of Chăl-dē′a, from which Ā′brăm had come, and who ruled all the lands, far and near.

After a time these little kings in the plain would not obey the greater king; so he and all his army made war upon them. A battle was fought on the plain, not far from Sŏd′om, and the kings of Sŏd′om and Gȯ-mŏr-rah were beaten in the battle, and their soldiers were killed. Then the king who had won the victory over his enemies came to Sŏd′om, and took everything that he could find in the city, and carried away all the people in the city, intending to keep them as slaves. After a battle, in those times, the army that won the victory took away all the goods, and made slaves of all the people on the side that had been beaten.

So Lŏt, with all that he owned, was carried away by enemies, who went up the valley from Sŏd′om, and did not stop to rest until they came to the head-waters of the river Jôr′dan, at a place afterward called Dăn. So, all that Lŏt's selfish choice gained for him was to lose all that he had, and to be made a prisoner and a slave.

Some one ran away from the battle, and came to Ā′brăm, who was living in his tent under the oak tree near Hē′bron. As soon as Ā′brăm heard what had happened, he called together all the men who were with him, his servants, his shepherds, and his people, and his friends; and he led them after the enemy that had taken away Lŏt. He followed as fast as his men could march, and found the enemy, with all the goods they had taken and all their prisoners, at Dăn, one of the places where the Jôr′dan River begins.

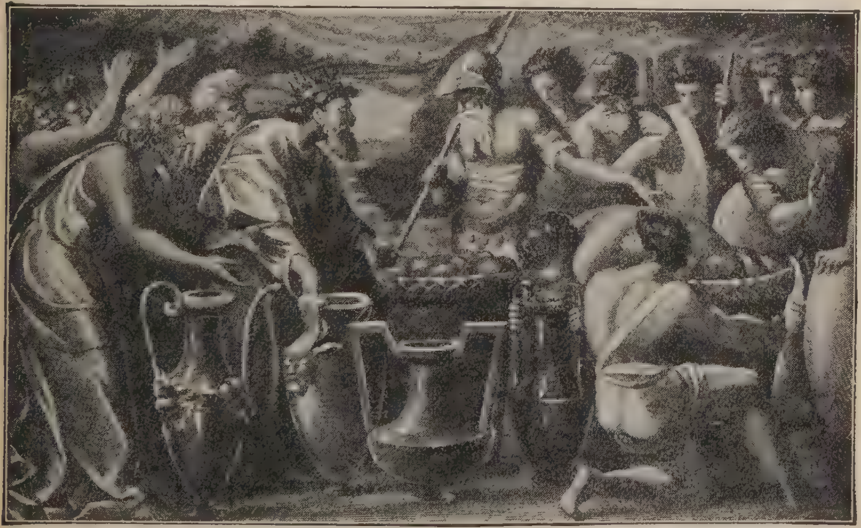
Ā′brăm rushed upon the enemies at night, while they were asleep, and fought them, and drove them away; so suddenly that they left behind them everything, and ran far among the mountains. And in their camp Ā′brăm found his nephew Lŏt, safe, with his wife and daughters, and all his goods, and, besides, all the goods and all the other people that had been carried away from Sŏd′om.

THE DEAD SEA NEAR WHERE STOOD SŎD′OM AND GŌ-MŎR′RAH.

Then the king of Sŏd′om came to meet Ā′brăm, at a place near the city of Jē-ru̥′să-lĕm, which was afterward called "The King's Valley." And with him came the king of Jē-ru̥′să-lĕm, which at that time was called Sā′lem. The name of this king was Mĕl-chĭz′e-dĕk, and unlike most other kings in the land at that time, he was a worshipper of the Lord God, as Ā′brăm was. And the king Mĕl-chĭz′e-dĕk blessed Ā′brăm, and said, "May the Lord God Most High, who made heaven and earth, bless Ā′brăm; and blessed be the Lord God Most High, who has given your enemies into your hand."

And Ā′brăm made a present to the King Mĕl-chĭz′e-dĕk, because he worshipped the Lord. And Ā′brăm gave to the king of Sŏd′om all the people and all the goods that had been taken away; and he would not take any pay for having saved them.

You would have thought that after this, Lŏt would have seen that it was wrong for him to live in Sŏd′om; but he went back to that city, and made his home there once more, even though his heart was made sad by the wickedness that he saw around him.



Ā′BRAM MEETS KING MĔL-CHĬZ′E-DĔK.

After Ā′brăm had gone back to his tent under the oak trees at Hē′bron, one day the Lord God spoke to him, and said:

"Fear not, Ā′brăm; I will be a shield to keep you safe from enemies; and I will give you a very great reward for serving me."

And Ā′brăm said, "O Lord God, what good can anything do to me, since I have no child to whom I can give it; and after I die, the man who will own everything that I have is not my son, but a servant." For although Ā′brăm had a large family of people around him, and many servants, he had no son, and he was now an old man, and his wife Sā′rāi was also old.

And God said to Ā′brăm, " The one to receive what you own shall not be a stranger, but shall be your own son."

And that night God brought Ā′brăm out of his tent, under the heavens, and said to him:

"Look now up to the sky, and count the stars, if you can. The people who shall spring from you, your descendants, in the years to come, shall be many more than all the stars that you can see."

Ā′brăm did not see how this promise of God could be kept; but he believed God's word, and did not doubt it. And God loved Ā′brăm because he believed the promise. Although Ā′brăm could not at that time see how God's promise could be kept, yet we know that it was kept, for the Ĭş′ra-el-īte people in the Bible story, and the Jews everywhere in the world now, all came from Ā′brăm.

After that, one day, just as the sun was going down, God came to Ā′brăm again, and told him many things that should come to pass. God said to Ā′brăm:

"After your life is ended, those who are to come from you, your descendants, shall go into a strange land. The people of that land shall make slaves of them, and shall be cruel to them. And they shall stay in that strange land four hundred years; and afterward they shall come out of that land, not any more as slaves, but very rich. And after the four hundred years they shall come back to this land, and this shall be their home. All this shall come to pass after your life, for you shall die in peace and be buried in a good old age. And all this land where you are living shall belong to your people."

So that Ā′brăm might remember this promise of God, God told Ā′brăm to make ready an offering of a lamb and a goat and a pair of pigeons, and to divide them in pieces, and place them opposite to each other. And that night Ā′brăm looked, and saw a smoke and fire, like a flaming torch, that passed between the pieces of the offering.

So a promise was made between God and Ā′brăm. God promised to give Ā′brăm a son and a people and a land, and Ā′brăm promised to serve God faithfully.

Such a promise as this, made by two people to each other, was called a covenant; and this was God's covenant with Ā′brăm.

Story Seven

THE ANGEL BY THE WELL

Genesis xvi : 1, to xvii : 27.

YOU remember that Ā'brăm's wife, who had journeyed with him from Ûr of the Chăl'deeş, and who lived in his tent all those years, was named Sā'rāi. Now Sā'rāi had a maid, a servant that waited on her, whose name was Hā'gar. She came from the land of Ē'ġy̆pt, where were the pyramids and the temples. But Sā'rāi and her maid Hā'gar had some trouble; they could not agree, and Sā'rai was so sharp and severe with Hā'gar, that at last Hā'gar ran away from Sā'rāi's tent.

She went out into the desert, and took the road that led down to Ē'ġy̆pt, her own country, the land from which she had come. On the way she stopped beside a spring of water. There the angel from the Lord met her, and said to her:

"Hā'gar, are you not the servant of Sā'rāi, Ā'brăm's wife? What are you doing here? Where are you going?"

And Hă'gar said to the angel:

"I am going away from my mistress Sā'rāi, because I do not wish to stay with her and serve her any longer."

Then the angel said to Hā'gar:

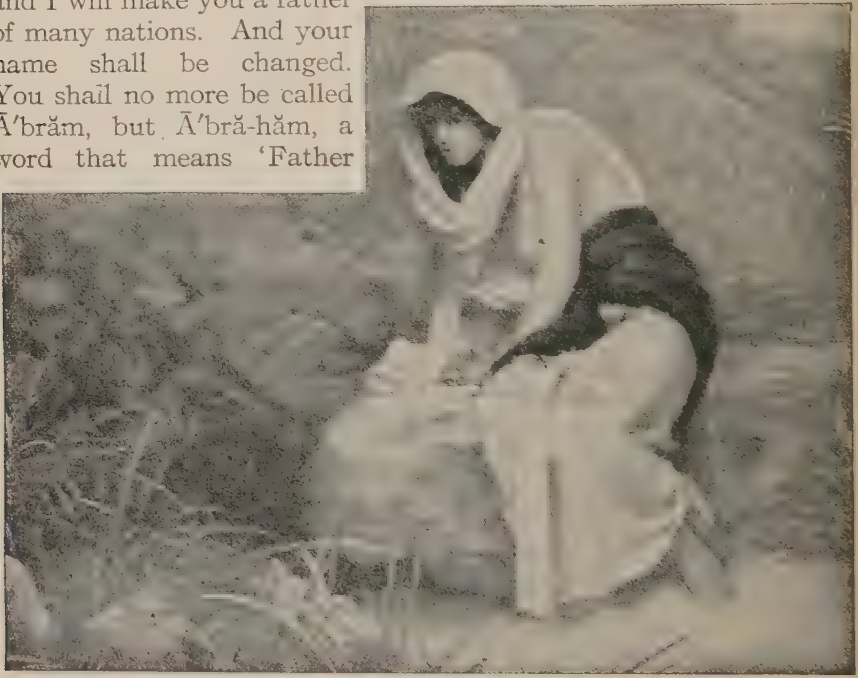
"Go back to your mistress Sā'rāi, and submit to her, for it is better for you than to go away. God knows all your troubles, for he sees and hears you, and he will help you. By and by you shall have a son, and you shall call his name Ĭsh'ma-el, because God has heard you."

The word Ĭsh'ma-el means "God hears." So whenever Hā'gar should speak her boy's name, she would think "God has heard me."

Then the angel told Hā'gar that her son Ĭsh'ma-el should be strong and fierce, and that no one should be able to overcome him, or his children, or his descendants, those who should come after him.

So Hā'gar was comforted, and went back again to serve Sā'rāi.

And afterward the well where she saw the angel was called by a name which means "The well of the Living One who sees me." And after this, Hā′gar had a son; and as the angel told her, she called his name Ĭsh′ma-el; that is, "God hears." We shall read more about Hā′gar and Ĭsh′ma-el a little later. After this, while Ā′brăm was living near Hē′bron, the Lord came to him again and spoke to him, while Ā′brăm bowed with his face to the ground. God said: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be perfect and I will make you a father of many nations. And your name shall be changed. You shall no more be called Ā′brăm, but Ā′bră-hăm, a word that means 'Father of a multitude,' because you shall be the father of many nations of people. And your wife's name shall also be changed. She shall no more be called Sā′rāi, but Sā′rah; that is, 'princess.' And you and Sā′rah shall have a son, and you shall call his name Ī′ṣaac; and he shall have sons when he becomes a man, and his descendants, those who spring from him, shall be very many people." So from this time he was no longer Ā′brăm, but Ā′bră-hăm, and his wife was called Sā′rah.



HĀ′GAR BY THE SPRING OF WATER.

Story Eight

THE RAIN OF FIRE THAT FELL ON A CITY

Genesis xviii : 1, to xix : 30.

ONE day Abră-hăm,—for we shall call him now by his new name,—was sitting in the door of his tent, when he saw three men coming toward him. He knew from their looks that they were not common men. They were angels, and one of them seems to have been the Lord himself, coming in the form of a man.

When Ā'bră-hăm saw these men coming, he went out to meet them, and bowed to them; and he said to the one who was the leader:

"My Lord, do not pass by; but come and rest a little under the tree. Let me send for water to wash your feet; and take some food; and stay with us a little while."

So this strange person, who was God in the form of a man, sat with his two followers in Ā'bră-hăm's tent, under the oak trees at Hē'bron. They took some food which Sā'rah, Ā'bră-hăm's wife, made ready for them, and then the Lord talked with Ā'bră-hăm. He told Ā'bră-hăm again that in a very little time God would send to him and Sā-rah a little boy, whose name should be Ī'ṣaac. In the language that Ā'bră-hăm spoke, the name Ī'ṣaac means "laughing;" because Ā'bră-hăm and Sā'rah both laughed aloud when they heard it. They were so happy that they could scarcely believe the news.

Then the three persons rose up to go, and two of them went on the road which led toward Sŏd'om, down on the plain of Jôr'dan, below the mountains. But the one whom Ā'bră-hăm called "My Lord" stopped after the others had gone away, and said:

"Shall I hide from Ā'bră-hăm what I am going to do? For Ā'bră-hăm is to be the father of a great people, and all the world shall receive a blessing through him. And I know that Ā'bră-hăm will teach his children and all those that live with him to obey the will of the Lord, and to do right. I will tell Ā′bră-hăm what I am going to do. I am going down to the city of Sŏd′om and the other cities that are near it, and I am going to see if the city is as bad as it seems to be; for the wickedness of the city is like a cry coming up before the Lord."

And Ā′bră-hăm knew that Sŏd′om was very wicked, and he feared that God was about to destroy it. And Ā′bră-hăm said:

"Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked, the good with the bad, in Sŏd′om? Perhaps there may be fifty good people in the city. Wilt thou not spare the city for the sake of fifty good men who may be in it? Shall not the Judge and Ruler of all the earth do right?"

And the Lord said:

"If I find in Sŏd′om fifty good people, then I will not destroy the city, but will spare it for their sake."

Then Ā′bră-hăm said again:

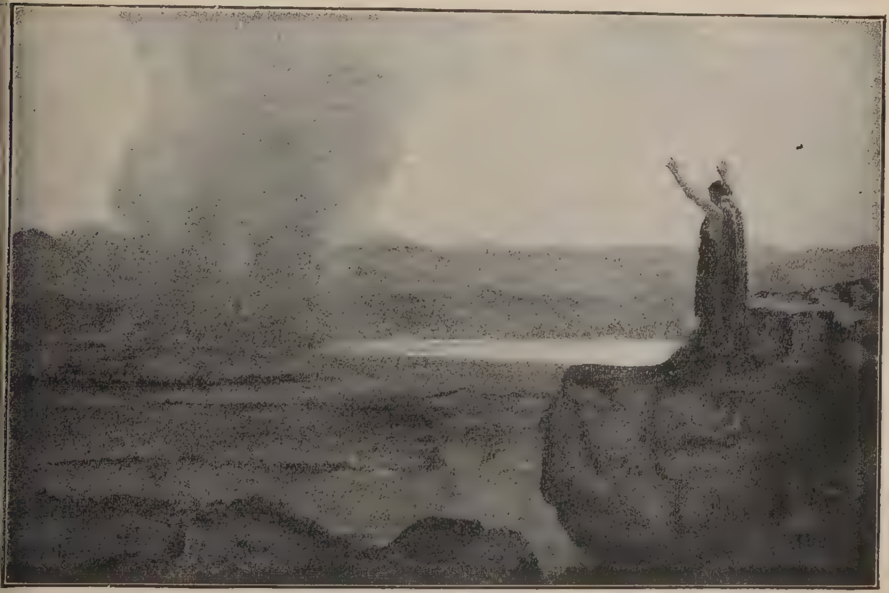
"Perhaps I ought not to ask anything more, for I am only a common man, talking with the Lord God. But suppose that there should be forty-five good people in Sŏd′om, wilt thou destroy the city because it needs only five good men to make up the fifty?"

And the Lord said, "I will not destroy it, if there are forty-five good men in it." And Ā′bră-hăm said, "Suppose there are forty good people in it,—what then?" And the Lord answered: "I will spare the city, if I find in it forty good men." And Ā′bră-hăm said, "O Lord, do not be angry, if I ask that if there are thirty good men in the city, it may be spared." And the Lord said, "I will not do it, if I find thirty good men there." And Ā′bră-hăm said, "Let me venture to ask that thou wilt spare it if twenty are there." The Lord said: "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty good men, if they are there." Then Ā′bră-hăm said, "O, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak only this once more. Perhaps there may be ten good men found in the city." And the Lord said, "If I find ten good men in Sŏd′om, I will spare the city."

And Ā′bră-hăm had no more to say. The Lord in the form of a man went on his way toward Sŏd′om; and Ā′bră-hăm turned back, and went to his tent.

You remember that Lŏt, the nephew of Ā′bră-hăm, chose the land of Sŏd′om for his home, and lived there, though the people were so wicked. You remember, too, how Lŏt was carried away captive when Sŏd′om was taken by its enemies, and how he was rescued by Ā′brăm. But after all that had happened, Lŏt went to live in Sŏd′om again; and he was there when the angels came to Ā′bră-hăm's tent, as we read in the last story.

Two of the angels who had visited Ā′bră-hăm went down to Sŏd′om, and walked through the city, trying to find some good men; for if they could find only ten, the city would be saved. But the only good man whom they could find was Lŏt. He took the angels, who looked like men, into his house, and treated them kindly, and made a supper for them.



SŎD′OM AND GŌ-MŎR′RAH BURNED UP.

The men of Sŏd′om, when they found that strangers were in Lŏt's house, came before the house in the street, and tried to take the two men out that they might do them harm, so wicked and cruel were they. But the men of Sŏd′om could do nothing against them, for when they tried to break open the door, and Lŏt was greatly frightened, the two angels struck all those wicked men blind in a moment, so that they could not see, and felt around in the dark for the door.

Then the angels said to Lŏt:

"Have you here any others besides yourself, any sons, or sons-in-law, or daughters? Whomever you have, get them out of this city quickly, for we are here to destroy this place, because it is so very wicked."

Then Lŏt went to the houses where the young men lived who had married some of his daughters, and said to them:

"Hurry, and get out of this place, for the Lord will destroy it."

But his sons-in-law, the husbands of his daughters, would not believe his words; they only laughed at him. What a mistake it was for Lŏt to live in a wicked city, where his daughters were married to young men living there!

And when the morning was coming, the two angels tried to make poor Lŏt hasten away. They said:

"Rise up quickly, and take your wife, and your two daughters that are here. If you do not haste, you will be destroyed with the city."

But Lŏt was slow to leave his house, and his married daughters, and all that he had; and the two angels took hold of him, and of his wife, and his two daughters; and the angels dragged them out of the city. God was good to Lŏt, to take him out of the city before it was destroyed.

And when they had brought Lŏt and his wife and his daughters out of the city, one of the angels said to him:

"Escape for your life; do not look behind you; do not stop anywhere in the plain; climb up the mountain, or you may be destroyed!"

And Lŏt begged the angels not to send him so far away. He said, "O my Lord, I cannot climb the mountain. Have mercy upon me, and let me go to that little city that lies yonder. It is only a little city, and you can spare it. Please to let me be safe there."

And the angel said, "We will spare that city for your sake; and we will wait until you are safe before we destroy these other cities."

So Lŏt ran to the little city, and there he found safety. In the language of that time, the word "Zō′ar" means little; so that city was afterward called Zō′ar. It was the time of sunrise when Lŏt came to Zō′ar.

Then, as soon as Lōt and his family were safely out of Sŏd′om, the Lord caused a rain of fire to fall upon Sŏd′om and the other cities on the plain. With the fire came great clouds of sulphur smoke, covering all the plain. So the cities were destroyed, and all the people in them; not one man or woman or child was left.

While Lŏt and his daughters were flying from the city, Lŏt's wife stopped, and looked back; and she became a pillar of salt, standing there upon the plain. Lŏt and his two daughters escaped, but they were afraid to stay in the little city of Zō′ar. They climbed up the mountain, away from the plain, and found a cave, and there they lived. So Lŏt lost his wife, and all that he had, because he had made his home among the wicked people of Sŏd′om.

And when Ā′bră-hăm, from his tent door on the mountain, looked down toward the plain, the smoke was rising from it, like the smoke of a great furnace.

And that was the end of the cities of the plain, Sŏd′om, and Gō′mŏr-rah, and the other cities with them. Zō′ar alone was saved, because Lŏt, a good man, prayed for it.

Story Nine

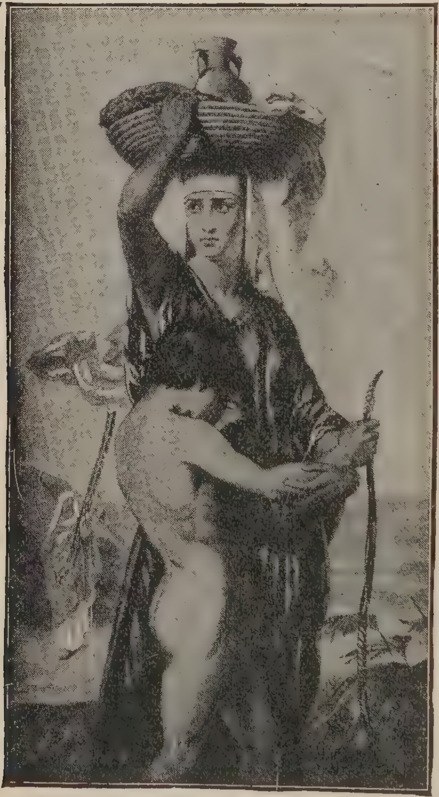
THE BOY WHO BECAME AN ARCHER

Genesis xxi : 1 to 21.

AFTER Sŏd′om and Gō-mŏr′rah were destroyed, Ā′bră-hăm moved his tent and his camp away from that part of the land, and went to live near a place called Gē′rär, in the southwest, not far from the Great Sea. And there at last, the child whom God had promised to Ā′bră-hăm and Sā′rah was born, when Ā′bră-hăm his father was a hundred years old.

They named this child Ī′ṣaac, as the angel had told them he should be named. And Ā′bră-hăm and Sā′rah were so happy to have a little boy, that after a time they gave a great feast to all the people, in honor of the little Ī′şaac.

You remember the story about Sā′rah's maid Hā′gar, the Ē′ġўptian woman, and how she ran away from her mistress, and saw an angel by a well, and afterward came back to Sā′rah, and had a child whose name was Ĭsh′ma-el. So now there were two boys in Ā′bră-hăm's tent, the older boy, Ĭsh′ma-el, the son of Hā′gar, and the younger boy, Ī′şaac, the son of Ā′bră-ham and Sā′rah.



HĀ′GAR GOES INTO THE WILDERNESS.

Ĭsh′ma-el did not like the little Ī′şaac, and did not treat him kindly. This made his mother Sā′rah very angry, and she said to her husband:

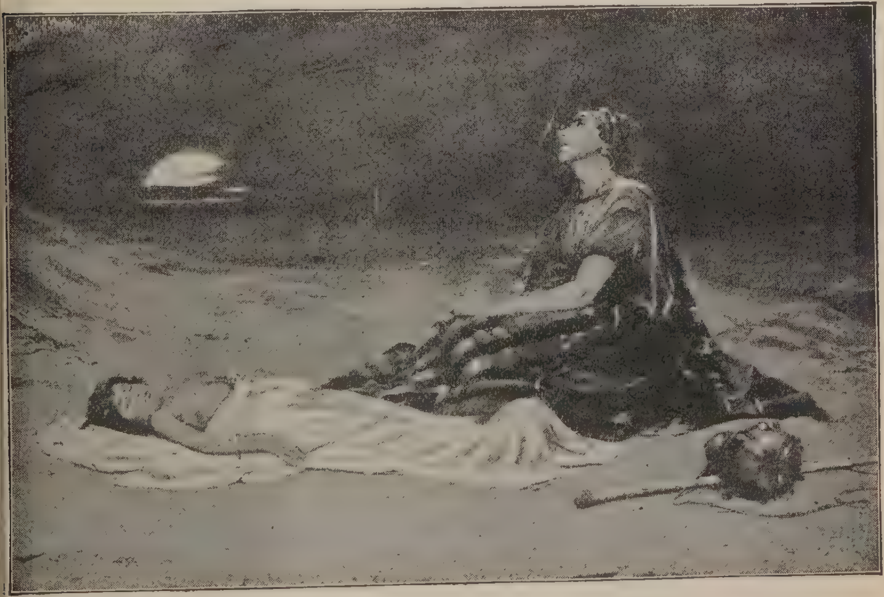
"I do not wish to have this boy Ĭsh′ma-el growing up with my son Ī′şaac. Send away Hā′gar and her boy, for they are a trouble to me."

And Ā′bră-hăm felt very sorry to have trouble come between Sā′rah and Hā′gar, and between Ī′şaac and Ĭsh′ma-el; for Ā′bră-hăm was a kind and good man, and he was friendly to them all.

But the Lord said to Ā′bră-hăm, "Do not be troubled about Ĭsh′ma-el and his mother. Do as Sā′rah has asked you to do, and send them away. It is best that Ī′şaac should be left alone in your tent, for he is to receive everything that is yours. I the Lord will take care of Ĭsh′ma-el, and will make a great people of his descendants, those who shall come from him."

So the next morning, Ā′bră-hăm sent Hā′gar and her boy away, expecting them to go back to the land of Ē′ġy̌pt, from which Hā′gar had come. He gave them some food for the journey, and a bottle of water to drink by the way. The bottles in that country were not like ours, made of glass. They were made from the skin of a goat, sewed tightly together. One of these skin bottles Ā′brā-hăm filled with water, and gave to Hā′gar.

And Hā′gar went away from Ā′brā-hăm's tent, leading her little boy. But in some way she lost the road, and wandered over



HĀ′GAR AND HER LITTLE BOY IN THE DESERT.

the desert, not knowing where she was, until all the water in the bottle was used up; and her poor boy, in the hot sun and the burning sand, had nothing to drink. She thought that he would die of his terrible thirst, and she laid him down under a little bush; and then she went away, for she said to herself:

"I cannot bear to look at my poor boy suffering and dying for want of water."

And just at that moment, while Hā′gar was crying, and her boy was moaning with thirst, she heard a voice saying to her:

"Hā′gar, what is your trouble? Do not be afraid. God has heard your cry, and the cry of your child. God will take care of you both, and will make of your boy a great nation of people."

It was the voice of an angel from heaven; and then Hā′gar looked, and there close at hand was a spring of water in the desert. How glad Hā′gar was, as she filled the bottle with water, and took it to her suffering boy under the bush!

After this, Hā′gar did not go down to Ē′ġy̆pt. She found a place near this spring, where she lived and brought up her son in the wilderness, far from other people. And God was with Ĭsh′ma-el, and cared for him. And Ĭsh′ma-el grew up in the desert, and learned to shoot with the bow and arrow. He became a wild man, and his children after him grew up to be wild men also. They were the Arabians of the desert, who even to this day have never been ruled by any other people, but wander through the desert and live as they please. So Ĭsh′ma-el came to be the father of many people, and his descendants, the wild Arabians of the desert, are living unto this day in that land, just as the Jews, who are the descendants of Ī′ṣaac, are living all over the world.

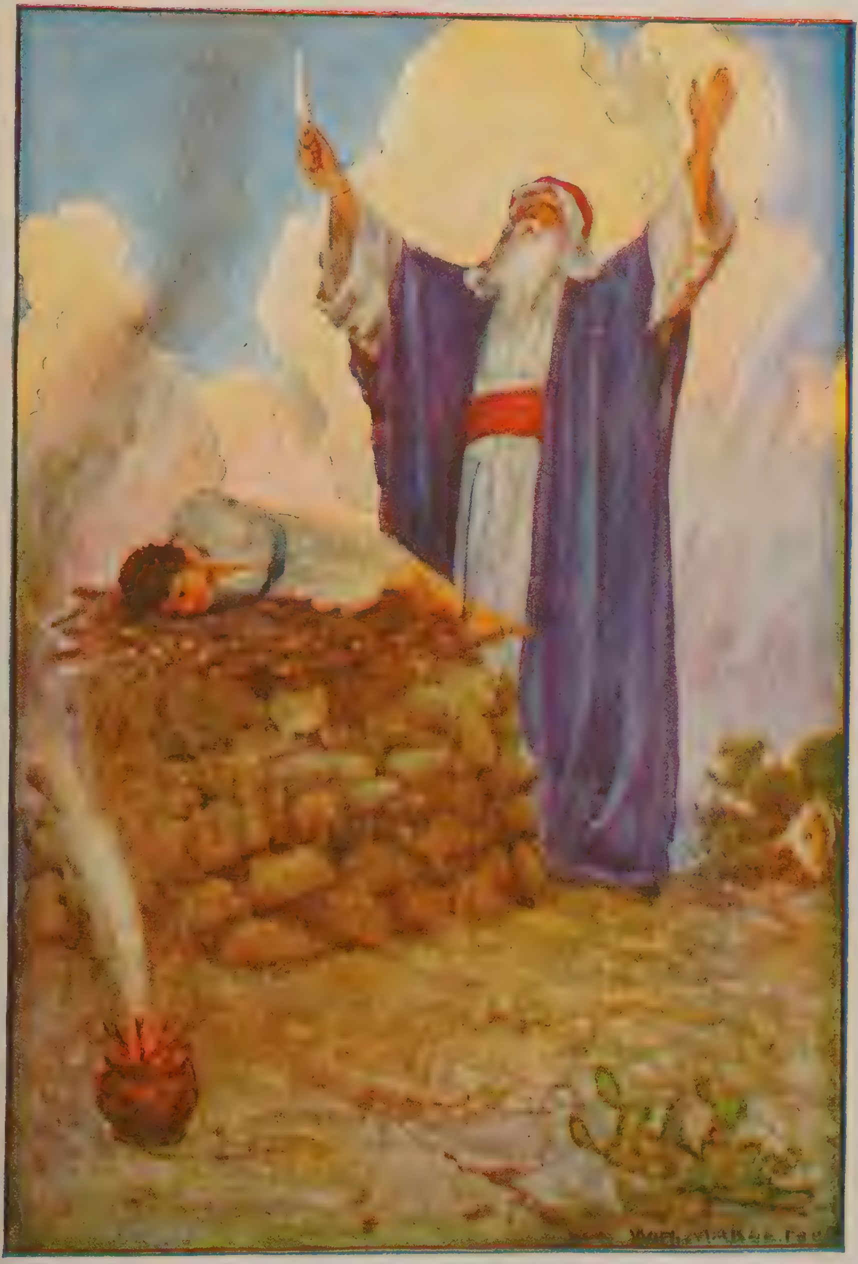
Story Ten

HOW AN ANGEL'S VOICE SAVED A BOY'S LIFE

Genesis xxii : 1, to xxiii : 20.

YOU remember that in those times of which we are telling, when men worshipped God, they built an altar of earth or of stone, and laid an offering upon it, as a gift to God. The offering was generally a sheep, or a goat, or a young ox, some animal that was used for food. Such an offering was called "a sacrifice."

But the people who worshipped idols often did what seems



ABRAHAM AND ISAAC ON MOUNT MORIAH

to us very strange, and very terrible. They thought that it would please their gods, if they would offer as a sacrifice the most precious living things that were their own; and they would take their own little children and kill them upon their altars as offerings to the gods of wood and stone, that were no real gods, but only images.

God wished to show to Ā′bră-hăm, and all his descendants, those who should come after him, that he was not pleased with such offerings as those of living people, killed on the altars. And God took a way to teach Ā′bră-hăm, so that he and his children after him would never forget it. Then at the same time he wished to see how faithful and obedient Ā′bră-hăm would be to his commands; how fully Ā′bră-hăm would trust in God, or as we should say, how great was Ā′bră-hăm's faith in God.

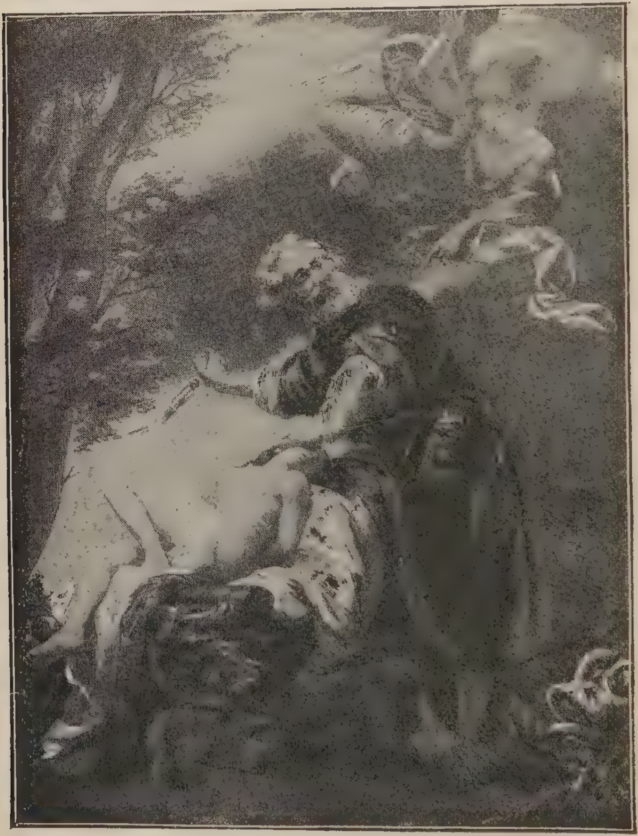
So God gave to Ā′bră-hăm a command which he did not mean to have obeyed, though this he did not tell to Ā′bră-hăm. He said:

"Take now your son, your only son Ī′şaac, whom you love so greatly, and go to the land of Mō-rī′ah; and there, on a mountain that I will show you, offer him for a burnt offering to me."

Though this command filled Ā′bră-hăm's heart with pain, yet he would not be as surprised to receive it as a father would in our day; for such offerings were very common among all those people in the land where Ā′bră-hăm lived. Ā′bră-hăm never for one moment doubted or disobeyed God's word. He knew that Ī′şaac was the child whom God had promised, and that God had promised, too, that Ī′şaac should have children, and that those coming from Ī′şaac should be a great nation. He did not see how God could keep his promise with regard to Ī′şaac, if Ī′şaac should be killed as an offering: unless, indeed, God should raise him up from the dead afterward. But Ā′bră-hăm undertook at once to obey God's command. He took two young men with him, and an ass laden with wood for the fire; and he went toward the mountain in the north, Ī′şaac his son walking by his side. For two days they walked, sleeping under the trees at night in the open country. And on the third day, Ā′bră-hăm saw the mountain far away. And as they drew near to the mountain, Ā′bră-hăm said to the young men:

"Stay here with the ass, while I go up yonder mountain with Ī′şaac to worship; and when we have worshipped, we will come back to you."

For Ā′bră-hăm believed that in some way God would bring back Ī'şaac to life. He took the wood from the ass, and placed it on Ī'şaac, and the two walked up the mountain together. As they were walking Ī'şaac said, "Father, here is the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering?" And Ā'bră-hăm said, "My son, God will provide himself the lamb."


"Ā'BRĂ-HĂM! Ā'BRĂ-HĂM!"

And they came to the place on the top of the mountain. There Ā'bră-hăm built an altar of stones and earth heaped up, and on it he placed the wood. Then he tied the hands and the feet of Ī'şaac, and laid him on the wood on the altar. And Ā'bră-hăm lifted up his hand, holding a knife to kill his son. A moment longer, and Ī'şaac would be slain by his own father's hand. But just at that moment the angel of the Lord out of heaven called to Ā'bră-hăm, and said, "Ā'bră-ham! Ā'bră-hăm!" And Ā'bră-hăm answered, "Here I am, Lord." Then the angel of the Lord said:

"Do not lay your hand upon your son. Do no harm to him. Now I know that you love God more than you love your only son, and that you are obedient to God, since you are ready to give up your son, your only son, to God." What a relief and a joy these words from heaven brought to the heart of Ā′bră-hăm! How glad he was to know that it was not God's will for him to kill his son! Then Ā′bră-hăm looked around, and there in the thicket was a ram caught by his horns. And Ā′bră-hăm took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in place of his son. So Ā′bră-hăm's words came true, when he said that God would provide for himself a lamb. The place where this altar was built Ā′bră-hăm named Jė-hō′vah-jī′reh, words meaning, in the language that Ā′bră-hăm spoke, "The Lord will provide."

This offering, which seems so strange, did much good. It showed to Ā′bră-hăm, and to Ī′şaac also, that Ī′şaac belonged to God, for to God he had been offered; and in Ī′şaac, all those who should come from him, his descendants, had been given to God. Then it showed to Ā′bră-hăm, and to all the people after him, that God did not wish children or men killed as offerings for worship; and while all the people around offered such sacrifices, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, who came from Ā′bră-hăm and from Ī′şaac, never offered them, but offered oxen and sheep and goats instead. And it looked onward to a time when, just as Ā′bră-hăm gave his son as an offering, God should give his Son Jē′şus Chrīst to die for the sins of the world. All this was taught in this act of worship on Mount Mō-rī′ah.

Some think that on the very place where this offering was given, the altar in the temple many years afterward stood on Mount Mō-rī′ah. If that be true, the rock is still there, and over it is a building called "The Dome of the Rock." Many people now visit this rock under the dome, and think of what took place there so long ago. At this time Ā′bră-hăm was living at a place called Bē′er-shē′bȧ, on the border of the desert, south of the land of Cā′năan. From Bē′er-shē′bȧ he took this journey to Mount Mō-rī′ah, and to Bē′er-shē-bȧ he came again after the offering on the mountain. Bē′er-shē-bȧ was the home of Ā′bră-hăm during most of his late years. After a time, Sā′rah, the wife of Ā′bră-hăm and the mother of Ī′şaac, died, being one hundred and twenty years old. And Ā′bră-hăm bought of the people of Hē′bron a cave, called the cave of Măch-pē′lah; and there he buried Sā′rah his wife. This place is still known as the city of Hē′bron, but the people who live there will not allow any strangers to visit it.

Story Eleven

THE STORY OF A JOURNEY AFTER A WIFE

Genesis xxiv : 1, to xxv : 18.

AFTER the death of Sā′rah, Ī′şaac, her son, was lonely; and as he was now old enough to marry, Ā′bră-hăm sought a wife for him; for in those countries the parents have always chosen the wives for their sons, and husbands for their daughters. Ā′bră-hăm did not wish Īşaac to marry any woman of the people in the land where he was living, for they were all worshippers of idols, and would not teach their children the ways of the Lord. For the same reason, Ā′bră-hăm did not settle in one place, and build for himself and his people a city. By moving from place to place, Ā′bră-hăm kept his people apart.

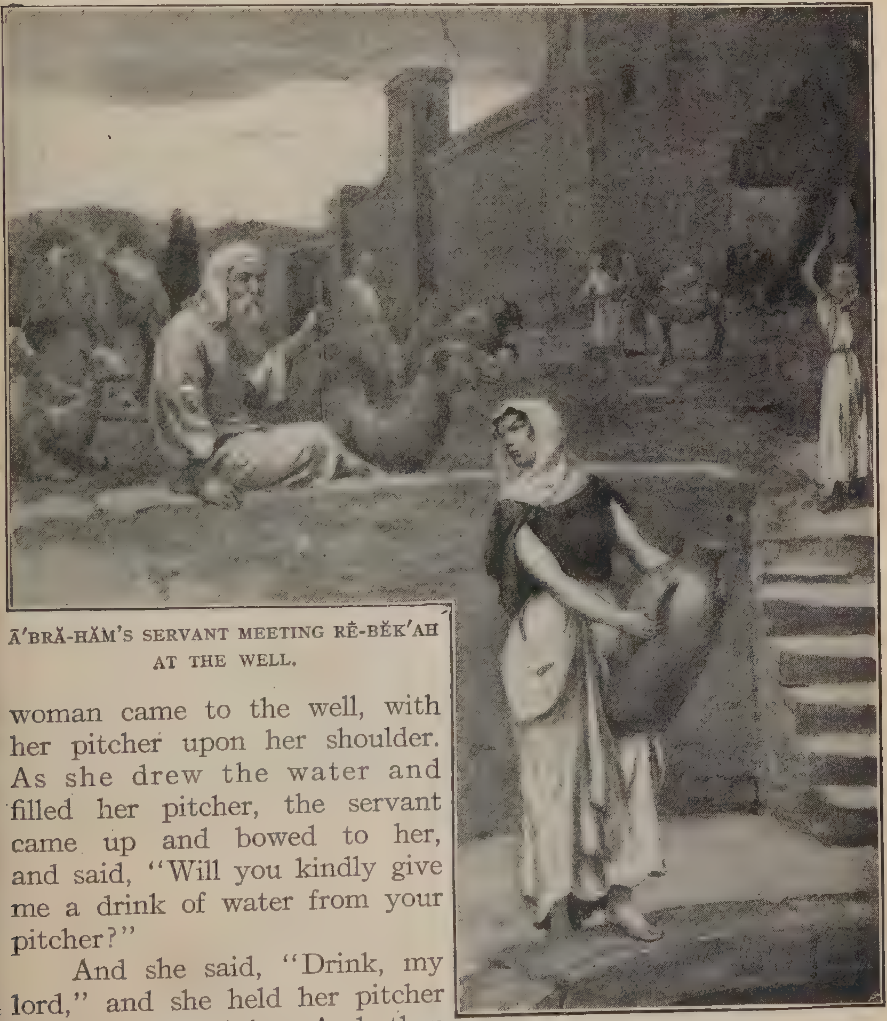
You remember that when Ā′bră-hăm made his long journey to the land of Cā′năan, he stayed for a time at a place called Hā′ran, in Mĕs-o-pȯ-tā′mĭ-ȧ, between the two rivers Tī′gris and Eū-phrā′tēs, far to the northeast of Cā′năan. When Ā′bră-hăm left Hā′ran to go to Cā′năan, his brother Nā′hôr and his family stayed in Hā′ran. They worshipped the Lord, as Ā′bră-hăm and his family did; and Ā′bră-hăm thought that it would be well to find among them a wife for his son Ī′şaac.

As Ā′bră-hăm could not leave his own land of Cā′năan and go to Hā′ran in Mĕs-o-pȯ-tā′mĭ-ȧ to find a wife for his son Ī′şaac, he called his chief servant, E-li-ē′zĕr, the man whom he trusted, who cared for all his flocks and cattle, and who ruled over his other servants, and sent him to Hā′ran to find a wife for his son Ī′şaac.

And the servant took ten camels, and many presents and went on a long journey, and at last came to the city of Hā′ran, where the family of Nā′hôr, the brother of Ā′bră-hăm, was living. And at the well, just outside of the city, at the time of evening, he made his camels kneel down. Then the servant prayed to the

Lord that he would send to him just the right young woman to be the wife of his master's son Ī'şaac.

And just as the servant was praying, a beautiful young woman came to the well, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. As she drew the water and filled her pitcher, the servant came up and bowed to her, and said, "Will you kindly give me a drink of water from your pitcher?"



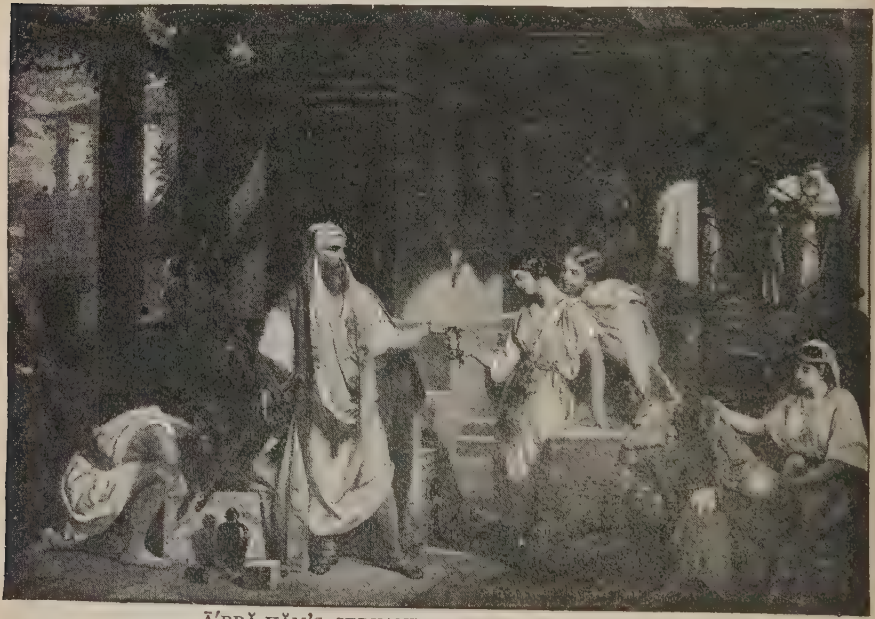
Ā'BRĂ-HĂM'S SERVANT MEETING RĒ-BĔK'AH AT THE WELL.

And she said, "Drink, my lord," and she held her pitcher for him to drink. And then she said, "I will draw some water for your camels also to drink."

And she emptied her pitcher into the trough by the well, and drew more water, until she had given drink to all the camels.

And the servant of Ā′brā-hăm looked at her, and wondered whether she might be the right woman for Ī′ṣaac to marry. And he said to her, "Will you tell me your name, young lady, and whose daughter you are? And do you suppose that I could find a place to stay at your father's house?" And then he gave her a gold ring and gold bracelets for her wrists. And the beautiful young woman said, "My name is Rḗ-bĕk′ah; and my father is Bĕth-ụ′el, who is the son of Nā′hôr. You can come right to our house. We have room for you, and a place and food for your camels."

Then the man bowed his head and thanked God, for he saw that his prayer was answered, since this kind and lovely young woman was a cousin to Ī′ṣaac, his master's son. And he told Rḗ-bĕk′ah that he was the servant of Ā′brā-hăm, who was so near a relative to her own family.



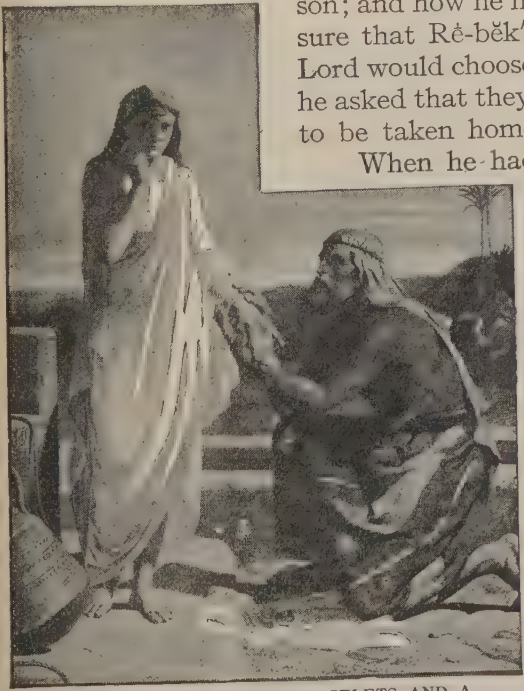
Ā′BRĂ-HĂM'S SERVANT SHOWS THE PRESENTS.

Then Rḗ-bĕk′ah ran home and told her parents of the stranger, and showed them the presents that he had given to her. And her brother Lā′ban went out to the man, and brought him into the house, and found a place for his camels. And they washed his feet, for that was the custom of the land, where people did not wear shoes, but sandals: and they set the table for a supper, and asked him to sit down and eat with them. But the man said, "I will not eat until I have told my errand."

After this he told them all about Ā'bră-hăm's riches; and how Ā'bră-hăm had sent him to Hā'ran to find a wife for Ī'şaac, his son; and how he had met Rė-bĕk'ah, and felt sure that Rė-bĕk'ah was the one whom the Lord would choose for Ī'şaac's wife; and then he asked that they would give him Rė-bĕk'ah to be taken home to be married to Ī'şaac.

When he had told his errand, Lā'ban, Rė-bĕk'ah's brother, and Bĕth-ụ'el, her father, said, "This comes from the Lord; it is his will; and it is not for us to oppose it. Here is Rė-bĕk'ah; take her, and let her be the wife of your master's son, for the Lord has shown it to be his will."

Then Ā'bră-hăm's servant gave rich presents to Rė-bĕk'ah, and to her mother, and her brother Lā'ban. And that night they had a feast, with great joy. And the next morning Ā'bră-hăm's servant said, "Now I must go home to my master." But they said, "O, not so soon! Let Rė-bĕk'ah stay with us for a few days, ten days at least, before she goes away from her home."



HE GAVE HER GOLD BRACELETS AND A GOLD RING.

And he said to them, "Do not hinder me; since God has given me what I came for, I must go back to my master."

And they called Rė-bĕk'ah, and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."

So the servant of Ā'bră-hăm went away, and took with him Rė-bĕk'ah, with good wishes, and blessings, and prayers, from all in her father's house. And after a long journey, they came to the place where Ā′bră-hăm and Ī′şaac were living. And when Ī′şaac saw Rė-bĕk′ah, he loved her; and she became his wife, and they were faithful to each other as long as they both lived.

Afterward Ā′bră-hăm, great and good man that he was, died, almost a hundred and eighty years old. And Ī′şaac and Ĭsh′ma-el buried Ā′bră-hăm in the cave where Ā′bră-hăm had buried Sā′rah at Hē′bron. Then Ī′şaac became the owner of all the riches of Ā′bră-hăm, his tents, and flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and camels, and servants. Ī′şaac was a peaceful, quiet man. He did not move his tents often, as his father had done, but stayed in one place nearly all his life.

Story Twelve

HOW JACOB STOLE HIS BROTHER'S BLESSING

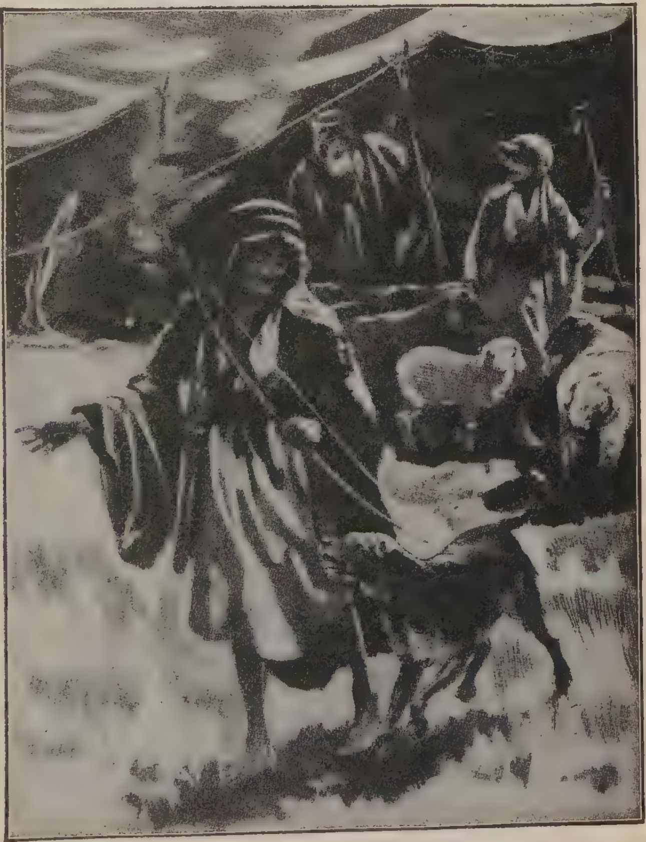
Genesis xxv : 27, to xxvii : 46.

AFTER Ā′bră-hăm died, his son Ī′şaac lived in the land of Cā′năan. Like his father, Ī′şaac's home was a tent; and around him were the tents of his people, and many flocks of sheep and herds of cattle feeding wherever they could find grass to eat and water to drink.

Ī′şaac and his wife Rė-bĕk′ah had two children. The older was named Ē′sạu and the younger Jā′cob. Ē′sạu was a man of the woods, and fond of hunting; and he was rough, and covered with hair. Even as a boy he was fond of hunting with his bow and arrow. Jā′cob was quiet and thoughtful, staying at home, and caring for the flocks of his father. Ī′şaac loved Ē′sạu more than Jā′cob, because Ē′sạu brought to his father that which he had killed in his hunting; but Rė-běk′ah liked Jā′cob, because she saw that he was wise and careful in his work.

Among the people in those lands, when a man dies, his older son receives twice as much as the younger of what the father has owned. This was called his "birthright," for it was his right as the oldest born. So Ē′sa̤u, as the older, had a "birthright" to more of Ī′ṣaac's possessions than Jā′cob. And besides this, there was the privilege of the promise of God that the family of Ī′ṣaac should receive great blessings.

Now Ē′sa̤u, when he grew up, did not care for his birthright or the blessing which God had promised. But Jā′cob, who was a wise man, wished greatly to have the birthright which would come to Ē′sa̤u when his father died. Once, when Ē′sa̤u came home, hungry and tired from hunting in the fields, he saw that Jā′cob had a bowl of something that he had just cooked for dinner. And Ē′sa̤u said: "Give me some of that red stuff in the dish. Will you not give me some? I am hungry."



Ē′SA̤U WAS FOND OF HUNTING.

And Jā′cob answered, "I will give it to you, if you will first of all sell to me your birthright."

And Ē′sạu said, "What is the use of the birthright to me now when I am almost starving to death? You can have my birthright if you will give me something to eat."

Then Ē′sạu made Jā′cob a solemn promise to give to Jā′cob his birthright, all for a bowl of food. It was not right for Jā′cob to deal so selfishly with his brother; but it was very wrong in Ē′sạu to care so little for his birthright, and with it God's blessing.

Some time after this, when Ē′sạu was forty years old, he married two wives. Though this would be very wicked in our times it was not supposed to be wrong then; for even good men then had more than one wife. But Ē′sạu's two wives were women from the people of Cā′năan, who worshipped idols, and not the true God. And they taught their children also to pray to idols, so that those who came from Ē′sạu, the people who were his descendants, lost all knowledge of God, and became very wicked. But this was long after that time.

Ī′ṣaac and Rė-bĕk′ah were very sorry to have their son Ē′sạu marry women who prayed to idols and not to God; but still Ī′ṣaac loved his active son Ē′sạu more than his quiet son Jā′cob.

Ī′ṣaac became at last very old and feeble, and so blind that he could see scarcely anything. One day he said to Ē′sạu:

"My son, I am very old, and do not know how soon I must die. But before I die, I wish to give to you, as my older son, God's blessing upon you, and your children, and your descendants. Go out into the fields, and with your bow and arrows shoot some animal that is good for food, and make me a dish of cooked meat, such as you know I love; and after I have eaten it, I will give you the blessing."

Ē′sạu ought to have told his father that the blessing did not belong to him, for he had sold it to his brother Jā′cob. But he did not tell his father. He went out into the fields hunting, to find the kind of meat which his father liked the most.

Now Rė-bĕk′ah was listening, and heard all that Ī′ṣaac had said to Ē′sạu. She knew that it would be better for Jā′cob to have the blessing than for Ē′sạu; and she loved Jā′cob more than Ē′sạu. So she called to Jā′cob, and told him what Ī′ṣaac had said to Ē′sạu, and she said:

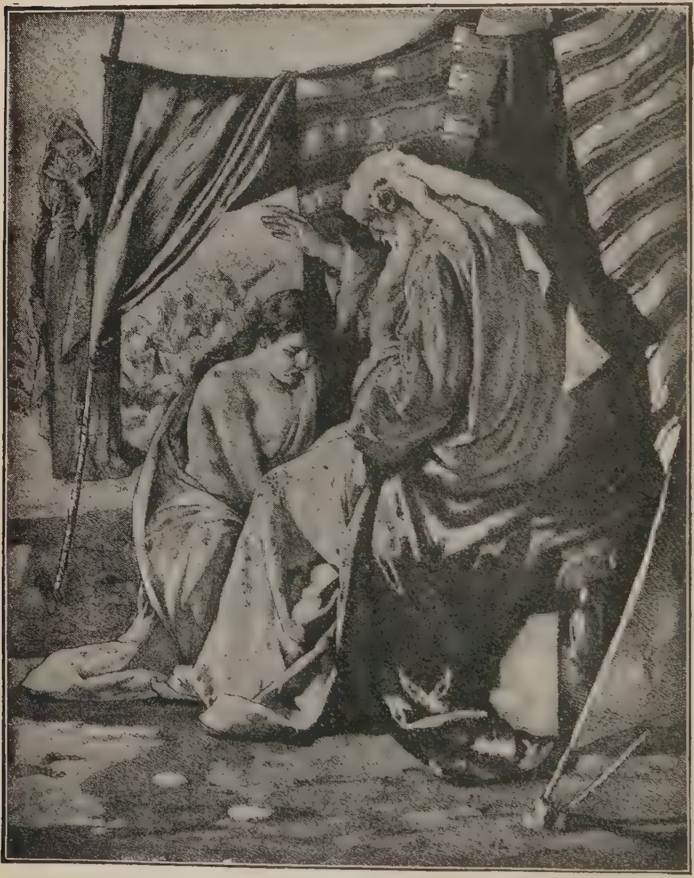
"Now, my son, do what I tell you and you will get the blessing instead of your brother. Go to the flocks and bring to me two little kids from the goats: and I will cook them just like the meat which Ē′sa̤u cooks for your father. And you will bring it to your father; and he will think that you are Ē′sa̤u, and will give you the blessing; and it really belongs to you."

Ē′SA̤U SELLING HIS BIRTHRIGHT FOR A MEAL.

But Jā′cob said, "You know that Ē′sa̤u and I are not alike. His neck and arms are covered with hair, while mine are smooth. My father will feel of me, and he will find that I am not Ē′sa̤u; and then, instead of giving me a blessing, I am afraid that he will curse me."

But Rĕ-bĕk′ah answered her son, "Never mind, you do as I have told you, and I will take care of you. If any harm comes, it will come to me; so do not be afraid, but go and bring the meat."

Then Jā′cob went and brought a pair of little kids from the flock, and from them his mother made a dish of food, so that it would be to the taste just as Ī′ṣaac liked it. Then Rĕ-bĕk′ah found some of Ē′sạu's clothes, and dressed Jā′cob in them; and she placed on his neck and his hands some of the skins of the kids, so that his neck and hands would feel rough and hairy to the touch.



Ī′ṣAAC BLESSES JĀ′COB.

Then Jā′cob came into his father's tent, bringing the dinner, and speaking as much like Ē′sạu as he could, he said:

"Here I am, my father."

And Ī′ṣaac said, "Who are you, my son?"

And Jā′cob answered, "I am Ē′sạu, your oldest son. I have done as you bade me; now sit up, and eat the dinner that I have made; and then give me your blessing, as you promised me."

And Ī'ṣaac said, "How is it that you found it so quickly?"

Jā'cob answered, "Because the Lord your God showed me where to go, and gave me good success."

Ī'ṣaac did not feel certain that it was his son Ē'sạu, and he said, "Come nearer and let me feel you, so that I may know that you are really my son Ē'sạu."

And Jā'cob went up close to Ī'ṣaac's bed, and Ī'ṣaac felt of his face, and his neck, and his hands, and he said:

"The voice sounds like Jā'cob, but the hands are the hands of Ē'sạu. Are you really my son Ē'sạu?"

And Jā'cob again told a lie to his father, and said, "I am."

Then the old man ate the food that Jā'cob had brought to him, and he kissed Jā'cob, believing him to be Ē'sạu, and he gave him the blessing, saying to him:

"May God give you the dew of heaven, and the richness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. May nations bow down to you and people become your servants. May you be the master over your brother; and may your family and descendants that shall come from you rule over his family and his descendants. Blessed be those that bless you, and cursed be those that curse you."

Just as soon as Jā'cob had received the blessing he rose up and hastened away. He had scarcely gone out, when Ē'sạu came in from his hunting, with the dish of food that he had cooked, and he said:

"Let my father sit up, and eat the food that I have brought and give me the blessing."

And Ī'ṣaac said, "Why, who are you?"

Ē'sạu answered, "I am your son, your oldest son Ē'sạu."

And Ī'ṣaac trembled and said, "Who then is the one that came in, and brought to me food? And I have eaten his food, and have blessed him; yes, and he shall be blessed."

When Ē'sạu heard this he knew that he had been cheated; and he cried aloud, with a bitter cry, "O my father, my brother has taken away my blessing, just as he took away my birthright! But cannot you give me another blessing, too? Have you given everything to my brother?" And Ī'ṣaac told him all that he had said to Jā'cob.

He said, "I have told him that he shall be the ruler, and that all his brothers and their children will be under him. I have promised him the richest ground for his crops, and rains from heaven to make them grow. All these things have been spoken, and they must come to pass. What is left for me to promise you, my son?"

But Ē′sạu begged for another blessing, and Ī′ṣaac said:

"My son, your dwelling shall be of the riches of the earth, and of the dew of heaven. You shall live by your sword, and your descendants shall serve his descendants. But in time to come they shall break loose, and shall shake off the yoke of your brother's rule, and shall be free."

All this came to pass many years afterward. The people who came from Ē′sạu lived in a land called Ē′dom, on the south of the land of Ĭṣ′ra-el, where Jā′cob's descendants lived. And after a time the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes became rulers over the Ē′dom-ītes; and, later still, the Ē′dom-ītes made themselves free from the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes. But all this took place hundreds of years after both Ē′sạu and Jā′cob had passed away. The blessing of God's covenant or promise came to Ĭṣ′ra-el, and not to the people from Ē′sạu.

It was better that Jā′cob's descendants, those who came after him, should have the blessing, than that Ē′sạu's people should have it; for Jā′cob's people worshipped God, and Ē′sạu's people walked in the way of the idols, and became wicked. But it was very wrong in Jā′cob to obtain the blessing in the way that he obtained it.

Story Thirteen

JACOB'S WONDERFUL DREAM

Genesis xxvii : 46, to xxx : 24.

AFTER Ē′sạu found that he had lost his birthright and his blessing, he was very angry against his brother Jā′cob; and he said to himself, and told others, "My father Ī′şaac is very old and cannot live long. As soon as he is dead, then I shall kill Jā′cob for having robbed me of my right."

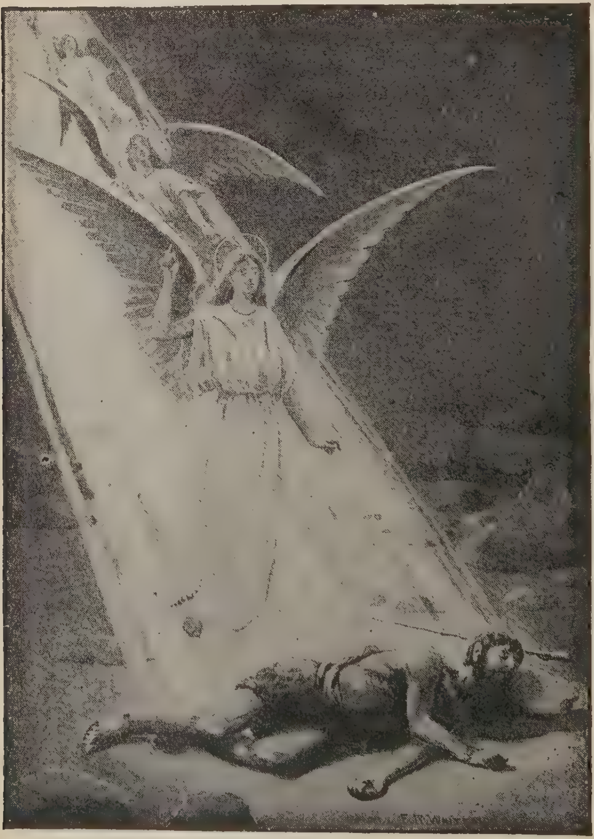
When Rė-bĕk′ah heard this, she said to Jā′cob, "Before it is too late, do you go away from home, and get out of Ē′sạu's sight. Perhaps when Ē′sạu sees you no longer, he will forget his anger; and then you can come home again. Go and visit my brother Lā′ban, your uncle, in Hā′ran, and stay with him for a little while, until Ē′sạu's anger is past."

You remember that Rė-bĕk′ah came from the family of Nā′hôr, Ā′bră-hăm's younger brother, who lived in Hā′ran, a long distance to the northeast of Cā′năan; and that Lā′ban was Rė-bĕk′ah's brother, as was told in Story Eleven.

So Jā′cob went out of Bē′er-shē′bȧ, on the border of the desert, and walked alone toward a land far to the north, carrying his staff in his hand. One evening, just about sunset, he came to a place among the mountains, more than sixty miles distant from his home. And as he had no bed to lie down upon, he took a stone and rested his head upon it for a pillow, and lay down to sleep. We would think that a hard pillow, but Jā′cob was tired, and soon fell asleep.

And on that night Jā′cob had a wonderful dream. In his dream he saw stairs leading up to heaven from the earth where he lay; and angels were coming down and going up upon the stairs. And above the stairs, he saw the Lord God standing. And God said to Jā′cob:

"I am the Lord, the God of Ā′bră-hăm, and the God of Ī′şaac your father; and I will be your God, too. The land where you are lying all alone, shall belong to you and to your children after you; and your children shall spread abroad over the lands, east, and west, and north, and south, like the dust of the earth: and in your family all the world shall receive a blessing. And I am with you in your journey, and I will keep you where you are going, and will bring you back to this land. I will never leave you, and I will surely keep my promise to you."



JĀ'COB'S WONDERFUL DREAM.

And in the morning Jā'cob awaked from his sleep, and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it! I thought that I was all alone, but God has been with me. This place is the house of God; it is the gate of heaven!"

And Jā'cob took the stone on which his head had rested, and he set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on it as an offering to God. And Jā'cob named that place Běth'-el, which in the language that Jā'cob spoke means "The House of God."

And Jā'cob made a promise to God at that time, and said:

"If God really will go with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and will bring me to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God; and this stone shall be the house of God; and of all that God gives me, I will give back to God one-tenth as an offering."

Then Jā′cob went onward in his long journey. He waded across the river Jôr′dan in a shallow place, feeling the way with his staff; he climbed mountains, and journeyed beside the great desert on the east, and at last he came to the city of Hā′ran. Beside the city was the well, where Ā′brā-hăm's servant had met Jā′cob's mother, Rė-bĕk′ah (see Story Eleven); and there, after Jā′cob had waited for a time, he saw a young woman coming with her sheep, to give them water.

Then Jā′cob took off the flat stone that was over the mouth of the well, and drew water, and gave it to the sheep. And when he found that this young woman was his own cousin Rā′chel, the daughter of Lā′ban, he was so glad that he wept for joy. And at that moment he began to love Rā′chel, and longed to have her for his wife.

Rā′chel's father, Lā′ban, who was Jā′cob's uncle, the brother of Rė-bĕk′ah, Jā′cob's mother, gave a welcome to Jā′cob, and took him into his home.

And Jā′cob asked Lā′ban if he would give his daughter Rā′chel to him as his wife; and Jā′cob said, "If you will give me Rā′chel, I will work for you seven years." And Lā′ban said, "It is better that you should have her than that a stranger should marry her."

So Jā′cob lived seven years in Lā′ban's house, caring for his sheep and oxen and camels; and such was his love for Rā′chel that the seven years seemed like a few days.

At last the day came for the marriage; and they brought in the bride, who after the manner of that land was covered with a thick veil, so that her face could not be seen. And she was married to Jā′cob; and when Jā′cob lifted up her veil, he found that he had married, not Rā′chel whom he loved, but her older sister Lē′ah, who was not beautiful, and whom Jā′cob did not love at all.

Jā′cob was very angry that he had been deceived, though that was just the way in which Jā′cob himself had deceived his father and cheated his brother Ē′sạu (see Story Twelve). But his uncle Lā′ban said:

"In our land we never allow the younger daughter to be married before the older daughter. Keep Lē′ah for your wife, and work for me seven years longer, and you shall have Rā′chel also."

For in those times, as we have seen, men often had two wives, or even more than two. No one thought that it was wrong then to have more than one wife, although now it is considered very wicked. So Jā′cob stayed seven years more, fourteen years in all, before he received Rā′chel as his wife.

While Jā′cob was living at Hā′ran, eleven sons were born to him. But only one of these was the child of Rā′chel, whom Jā′cob loved. This son was Jō′ṣeph, who was dearer to Jā′cob than any other of his children, partly because he was the youngest, and also because he was the child of his beloved Rā′chel.

Story Fourteen

A MIDNIGHT WRESTLING MATCH

Genesis xxx : 25, to xxxiii : 20.

JĀ′COB stayed a long time in the land of Hā′ran, much longer than he had expected to stay. And in that land Jā′cob became rich. As wages for his work with Lā′ban, Jā′cob took a share of the sheep, and oxen, and camels. And since Jā′cob was very wise and careful in his work, his share grew larger, until Jā′cob owned a great flock and much cattle. At last, after twenty years, Jā′cob decided to go back to the land of Cā′năan, and to his father Ī′ṣaac, who was still living, though now very old and feeble.

Jā′cob did not tell his uncle Lā′ban that he was going away; but while Lā′ban was absent from home, Jā′cob gathered together his wives, and children, and all his sheep and cattle, and camels, and he stole away quietly. When Lā′ban found that Jā′cob had left him, he was not at all pleased; for he wished Jā′cob still to care for the things that he owned, for Jā′cob managed them better than Lā′ban himself, and God blessed everything that Jā′cob undertook. Then, too, Lā′ban did not like to have his two daughters, the wives of Jā′cob, taken so far away from him.

So Lā′ban and the men who were with him followed after Jā′cob; but that night God spoke to Lā′ban in a dream and said:

"Do no harm to Jā′cob, when you meet him."

Therefore, when Lā′ban came to where Jā′cob was in his camp on Mount Ḡĭl′e-ăd, on the east of the river Jôr′dan, Lā′ban spoke kindly to Jā′cob. And Jā′cob and Lā′ban made a covenant, that is a promise between them. They piled up a heap of stones, and on it they set up a large rock like a pillar; and beside the heap of stones they ate a meal together; and Jā′cob said to Lā′ban:

"I promise not to go past this heap of stones, and this pillar to do you any harm. The God of your grandfather, Nā′hôr, and the God of my grandfather, Ā′bră-hăm, be the judge between us."

And Lā′ban made the same promise to Jā′cob; and then he kissed his daughters, Jā′cob's two wives, and all of Jā′cob's children, and bade them good-by; and Lā′ban went back to Hā′ran, and Jā′cob went on to Cā′năan.

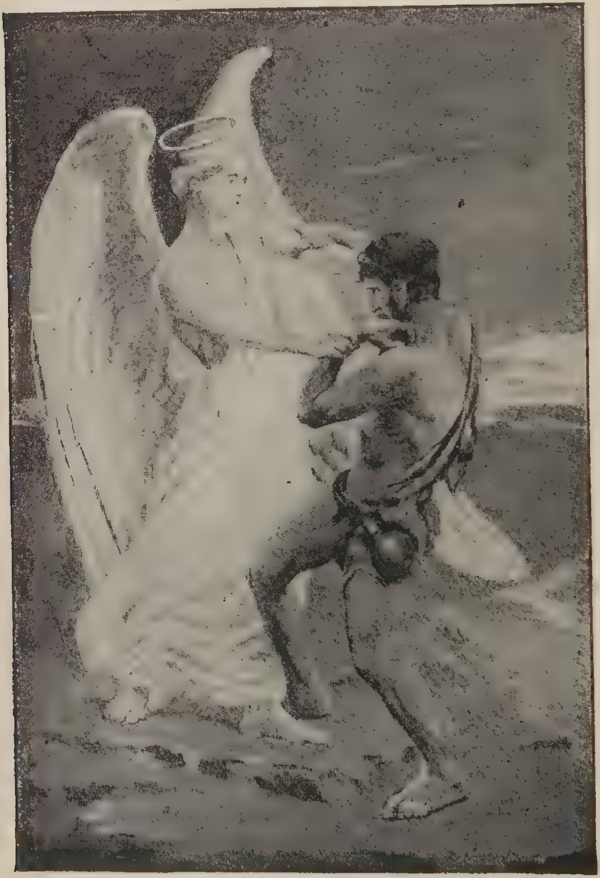
And Jā′cob gave two names to the heap of stones where they had made the covenant. One name was "Găl′e-ĕd," a word which means, "The heap of Witness." The other was "Mĭz′peh," which means "Watch-tower." For Jā′cob said, "The Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent from each other."

While Jā′cob was going back to Cā′năan, he heard news that filled him with fear. He heard that Ē′sa̤u, his brother, was coming to meet him, leading an army of four hundred men. He knew how angry Ē′sa̤u had been long before, and how he had threatened to kill him. And Jā′cob feared that Ē′sa̤u would now come upon him, and kill, not only Jā′cob himself, but his wives and his children. If Jā′cob had acted rightly toward his brother, he need not have feared Ē′sa̤u's coming; but he knew how he had wronged Ē′sa̤u, and he was terribly afraid to meet him.

That night Jā′cob divided his company into two parts; so that if one part were taken the other part might escape. And he sent onward before him, as a present to his brother, a great drove of oxen and cows, and sheep and goats, and camels and asses; hoping that by the present his brother might be made more kind toward him. And then Jā′cob prayed earnestly to the Lord God to help him.

After that he sent all his family across a brook that was in his path, called the brook Jăb′bŏk, while he stayed alone on the other side of the brook to pray again.

And while Jā′cob was alone, he felt that a man had taken hold of him, and Jā′cob wrestled with this strange man all the night. And the man was an angel from God. They wrestled so hard, that Jā′cob's thigh was strained in the struggle. And the angel said: "Let me go, for the day is breaking."



JĀ′COB AND THE ANGEL.

And Jā′cob said: "I will not let thee go until thou dost bless me." And the angel said:

"What is your name?"

And Jā′cob answered, "Jā′cob is my name."

Then the angel said:

"Your name shall no more be called Jā′cob, but Ĭs′ra-el, that is 'He who wrestles with God.' For you have wrestled with God and have won the victory."

And the angel blessed him there. And the sun rose as the angel left him; and Jā′cob gave a name to that place. He called it Pĕ-nī′el, or Pĕ-nū′el, words which in the language that Jā′cob spoke mean

"The Face of God." "For," said Jā′cob, "I have met God face to face." And after this Jā′cob was lame, for in the wrestle he had strained his thigh.

And as Jā′cob went across the brook Jăb′bŏk, early in the morning, he looked up, and there was Ē′sau̥ right before him. He bowed with his face to the ground, over and over again, as people do in those lands when they meet some one of higher rank than their own. But Ē′sau̥ ran to meet him, and placed his arms around his neck, and kissed him; and the two brothers wept together. Ē′sau̥ was kind and generous to forgive his brother all the wrong that he had done; and at first he would not receive Jā′cob's present, for he said: "I have enough, my brother." But Jā′cob urged him, until at last he took the present. And so the quarrel was ended, and the two brothers were at peace.

Jā′cob came to Shē′chem, in the middle of the land of Cā′năan, and there he set up his tents; and at the foot of the mountain, although there were streams of water all around, he dug his own well, great and deep; the well where Jē′ş̱us sat and talked with a woman many ages after that time; and the well that may be still seen. Even now the traveler who visits that place may drink water from Jācob's well.

After this Jā′cob had a new name, Ĭş̱′ra-el, which means, as we have seen, "The one who wrestles with God." Sometimes he was called Jā′cob, and sometimes Ĭş̱′ra-el. And all those who come from Ĭş̱′ra-el, his descendants, were called Ĭş̱′ra-el-ītes.

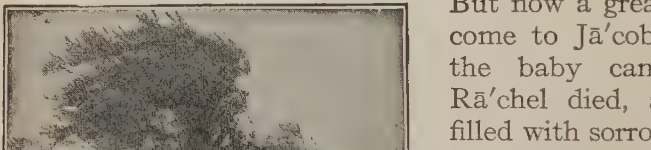
After this Ī′ş̱aac died, very old, and was buried by his sons Jā′cob and Ē′sau̥, in the cave at Hē′bron where Ā′bră-ham and Sā′rah were buried already. Ē′sau̥ with his children and his cattle went away to a land on the southeast of Cā′năan, which was called Ē′dom. And Jā′cob, or Ĭş̱′ra-el, and his family lived in the land of Cā′năan, dwelling in tents, and moving from place to place, where they could find good pasture, or grass upon which to feed their flocks.

Story Fifteen

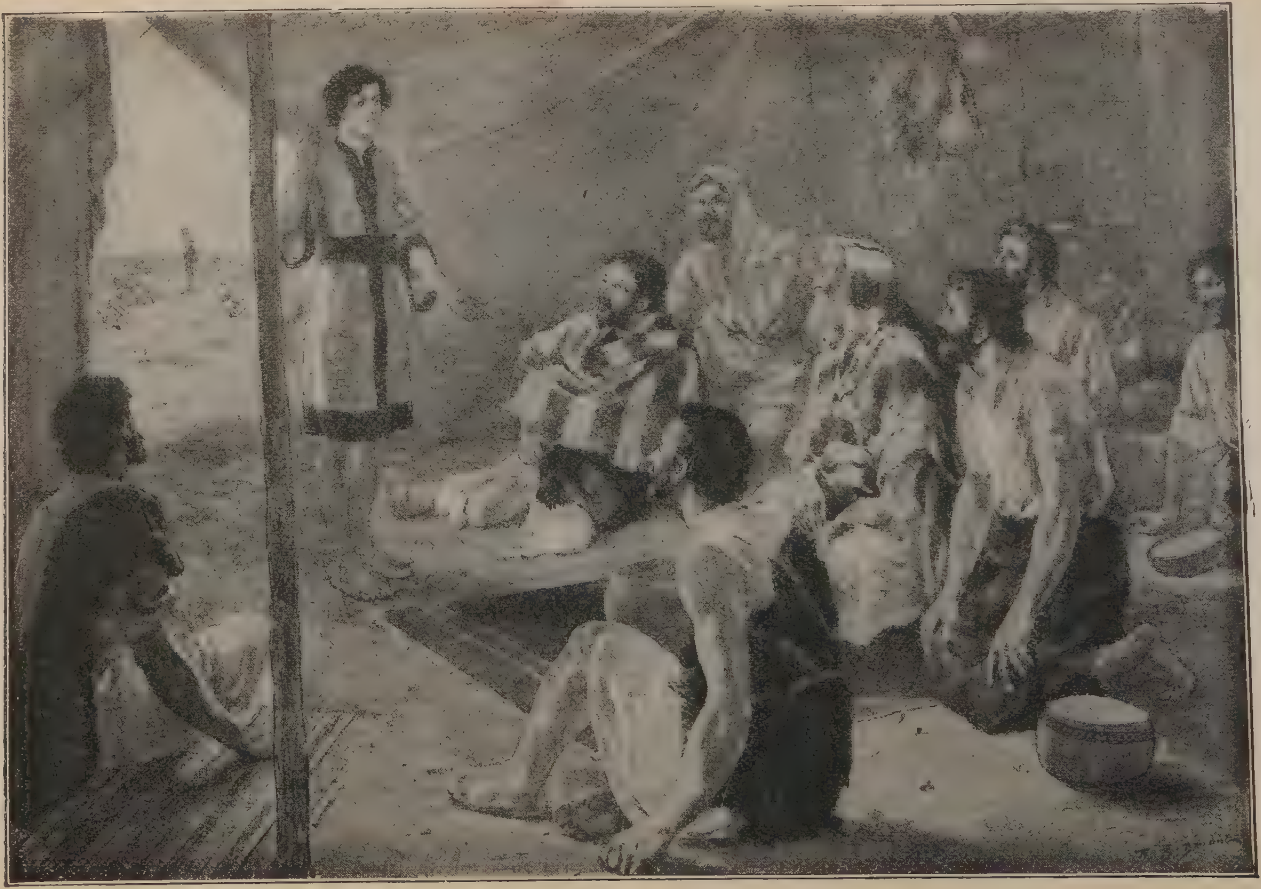
THE RICH MAN'S SON WHO WAS SOLD AS A SLAVE

Genesis xxxvii : 1 to 36.

AFTER Jā′cob came back to the land of Cā′năan with his eleven sons, another son was born to him, the second child of his wife Rā′chel, whom Jā′cob loved so well. You remember we told in Story Thirteen how long Jā′cob worked for Lā′ban caring for his sheep and oxen in order that he might have Rā′chel for his wife. But now a great sorrow was to come to Jā′cob, for soon after the baby came, his mother Rā′chel died, and Jā′cob was filled with sorrow. Even to this day you can see the place where Rā′chel was buried on the road between Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and Bĕth′le-hem. Jā′cob named ~~the~~ the child whom Rā′chel left, Bĕn′ja-mĭn; and now Jā′cob had twelve sons. Most of them were grown-up men, but Jō′şeph was a boy, seventeen years old, and his brother Bĕn′ja-mĭn was almost a baby.



RĀ′CHEL'S TOMB.



JŌ'S̱EPH TELLING HIS DREAM TO HIS BROTHERS.

Of all his children, Jā′cob loved Jō′şeph the best, because he was Rā′chel's child, because he was so much younger than most of his brothers, and because he was good, and faithful, and thoughtful. Jā′cob gave to Jō′şeph a robe or coat of bright color made somewhat like a long cloak with wide sleeves. This was a special mark of Jā′cob's favor to Jō′şeph, and it made his older brothers very envious of him.

Then, too, Jō′şeph did what was right, while his older brothers often did very wrong acts, of which Jō′şeph sometimes told their father, and this made them very angry at Jō′şeph. But they hated him still more because of two strange dreams that he had, and of which he told them. He said one day:

"Listen to this dream that I have dreamed. I dreamed that we were out in the field binding sheaves, when suddenly my sheaf stood up, and all your sheaves came around it, and bowed down to my sheaf." And they said, scornfully, "Do you suppose that the dream means that you will some time rule over us, and that we shall bow down to you?" Then a few days after Jō′şeph said, "I have dreamed again. This time I saw in my dream the sun and the moon and eleven stars all come and bow down to me."

And his father said to him, "I do not like you to dream such dreams. Shall I, and your mother, and your brothers, come and bow down before you, as if you were a king?"

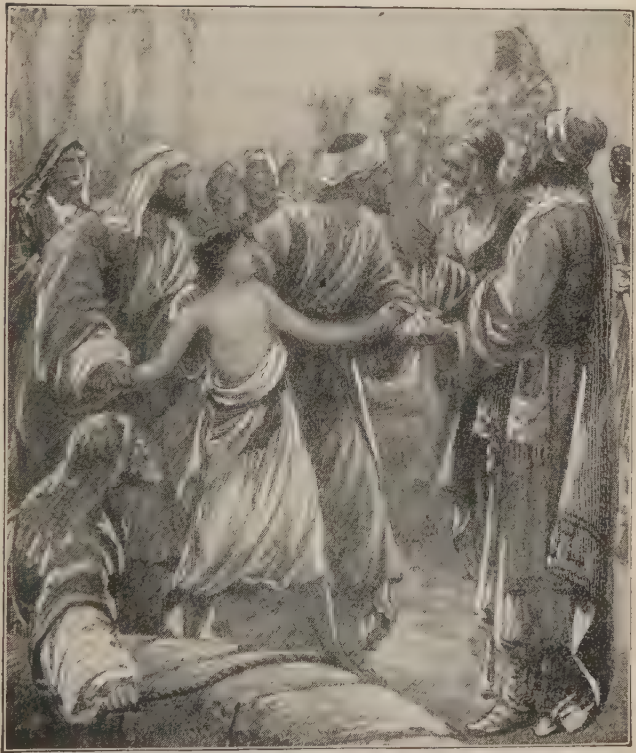
His brothers hated Jō′şeph, and would not speak kindly to him; but his father thought much of what Jō′şeph had said.

At one time, Jō′şeph's ten older brothers were taking care of the flock in the fields near Shē′chem, which was nearly fifty miles from Hē′bron, where Jā′cob's tents were spread. And Jā′cob wished to send a message to his sons, and he called Jō′şeph, and said to him, "Your brothers are near Shē′chem with the flock. I wish that you would go to them, and take a message, and find if they are well, and if the flocks are doing well; and bring me word from them."

That was quite an errand for a boy to go alone over the country, and find his way, for fifty miles, and then walk home again. But Jō′şeph was a boy that could take care of himself, and could be trusted; so he went forth on his journey, walking northward over the mountains, past Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm, and Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and Bĕth′-el,—though we are not sure that any of those cities were then built, except Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, which we know was already a strong city.

When Jō′şeph reached Shē′chem he cound not find his brothers, for they had taken their flocks to another place. A man met Jō′şeph wandering in the field, and asked him, "Whom are you seeking?" Jō′şeph said, "I am looking for my brothers, the sons of Jā′cob. Can you tell me where I will find them?" And the man said, "They are at Dō′than; for I heard them say that they were going there." Then Jō′şeph walked over the hills to Dō′than, which was fifteen miles further. And his brothers saw him afar off coming towards them. They knew him by his bright garment; and one said to another:

"Look, that dreamer is coming! Come, let us kill him, and throw his body into a pit, and tell his father that some wild beast has eaten him; and then we will see what becomes of his dreams."



JŌ′ŞEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS.

One of his brothers, whose name was Reṳ′ben, felt more kindly toward Jō′şeph than the others; but he did not dare to oppose the others openly. Reṳ′ben said:

"Let us not kill him; but let us throw him into this pit, here in the wilderness, and leave him there to die."

But Reṳ′ben intended, after they had gone away, to lift Jō′ş̧eph out of the pit, and take him home to his father. The brothers did as Reṳ′ben told them; they threw Jō′ş̧eph into the pit, which was empty. He cried, and begged them to save him, but they would not. They calmly sat down to eat their dinner on the grass, while their brother was calling to them from the pit.

After the dinner, Reṳ′ben chanced to go to another part of the field, so that he was not at hand when a company of men passed by with their camels, going from Gĭl′e-ăd, on the east of the river Jôr′dan, to Ē′ġy̆pt, to sell spices and fragrant gum from trees to the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş. Then Jū′dah, another of Jō′ş̧eph's brothers, said, "What good will it do us to kill our brother? Would it not be better for us to sell him to these men, and let them carry him away? After all, he is our brother, and we would better not kill him?"

His brothers agreed with him; so they stopped the men who were passing, and drew up Jō′ş̧eph from the pit; and for twenty pieces of silver, they sold Jō′ş̧eph to these men; and they took him away with them down to Ē′ġy̆pt.

After a while, Reṳ′ben came to the pit, where he had left Jō′ş̧eph, and looked into it; but Jō′ş̧eph was not there. Then Reṳ′ben was in great trouble, and he came back to his brothers saying, "The boy is not there! What shall I do?"

Then his brothers told Reṳ′ben what they had done, and they all agreed together to deceive their father. They killed one of the goats, and dipped Jō′ş̧eph's coat in its blood, and they brought it to their father, and they said to him, "We found this coat out in the wilderness. Look at it, and see if you think it was your son's." And Jā′cob knew it at once. He said, "It is my son's coat. Some wild beast has eaten him. There is no doubt that Jō′ş̧eph has been torn in pieces!"

And Jā′cob's heart was broken over the loss of Jō′ş̧eph, all the more because he had sent Jō′ş̧eph alone on the journey through the wilderness. They tried to comfort him, but he would not be comforted. He said:

"I will go down to the grave mourning for my poor lost son."

So the old man sorrowed for his son Jō′ş̧eph; and all the time his wicked brothers knew that Jō′ş̧eph was not dead; but they would not tell their father the dreadful deed that they had done to their brother, in selling him as a slave.

Story Sixteen

FROM THE PRISON TO THE PALACE

Genesis xl : 1, to xli : 44.

THE men who bought Jō′şeph from his brothers were called Ĭsh′ma-el-ītes, because they belonged to the family of Ĭsh′ma-el, who, you remember, was the son of Hā′gar, the servant of Sā′rah. These men carried Jō′şeph southward over the plain which lies beside the great sea on the west of Cā′năan; and after many days they brought Jō′şeph to Ē′ġy̆pt. How strange it must have seemed to the boy who had lived in tents, to see the great river Nile, and the cities, thronged with people, and the temples, and the mighty pyramids!

The Ĭsh′ma-el-ītes sold Jō′şeph as a slave to a man named Pŏt′ĭ-phar, who was an officer in the army of Phā′raōh, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt. Jō′şeph was a beautiful boy, cheerful and willing in spirit, and able in all that he undertook; so that his mastẹr, Pŏt′ĭ-phar, became very friendly with him, and after a time he placed Jō′şeph in charge of his house, and everything in it. For some years Jō′şeph continued in the house of Pŏt′ĭ-phar, a slave in name, but in reality the master of all his affairs, and ruler over his fellow-servants.

But Pŏt′ĭ-phar's wife, who at first was very friendly to Jō′şeph, afterward became his enemy, because Jō′şeph would not do wrong to please her. She told her husband falsely that Jō′şeph had done a wicked deed. Her husband believed her, and was very angry at Jō′şeph, and put him in the prison with those who had been sent to that place for breaking the laws of the land. How hard it was for Jō′şeph to be charged with a crime, when he had done no wrong, and to be thrust into a dark prison among wicked people!

But Jō′şeph had faith in God, that at some time all would come out right; and in the prison he was cheerful, and kind, and helpful, as he had always been. The keeper of the prison saw that Jō′şeph was not like the other men around him, and he was kind to Jō′şeph.

In a very little while Jō'ṣeph was placed in charge of all his fellow-prisoners, and took care of them; just as he had taken care of everything in Pŏt'ĭ-phar's house. The keeper of the prison scarcely looked into the prison at all, for he had confidence in Jō'ṣeph, that he would be faithful and wise in doing the work given to him. Jō'ṣeph did right, and served God; and God blessed Jō'ṣeph in everything.

While Jō'ṣeph was in the prison, two men were sent there by the king of Ē'ġy̆pt, because he was displeased with them. One was the king's chief butler, who served the king with wine; the other was the chief baker, who served hin with bread. These two men were under Jō'ṣeph's care, and Jō'ṣeph waited on them, for they were men of rank.

A GREAT TEMPLE IN Ē'ĠY̆PT.

One morning, when Jō'ṣeph came into the room in the prison where the butler and the baker were kept, he found them looking quite sad. Jō'ṣeph said to them:

"Why do you look so sad to-day?" Jō'ṣeph was cheerful and happy in his spirit, and he wished others to be happy, even in prison.

And one of the men said, "Each one of us dreamed last night a very strange dream; and there is no one to tell us what our dreams mean."

For in those times, before God gave the Bible to men, he often spoke to men in dreams; and there were wise men, who could sometimes tell what the dreams meant.

"Tell me," said Jō′şeph, "what your dreams were. Perhaps my God will help me to understand them."

Then the chief butler told his dream. He said, "In my dream I saw a grape-vine with three branches; and as I looked the branches shot out buds, and the buds became blossoms, and the blossoms turned into clusters of ripe grapes. And I picked the grapes, and squeezed their juice into King Phā′raōh's cup, and it became wine; and I gave it to King Phā′raōh to drink, just as I used to do when I was beside his table."

Then Jō′şeph said, "This is what your dream means. The three branches mean three days. In three days King Phā′raōh will call you out of prison, and will put you back in your place; and you shall stand at his table, and shall give him his wine, as you have given it before. But when you go out of prison, please to remember me, and try to find some way to get me, too, out of this prison. For I was stolen out of the land of Cā′năan, and sold as a slave; and I have done nothing wrong, to deserve being put in this prison. Do speak to the king for me, that I may be set free."

Of course the chief butler felt very happy to hear that his dream had so pleasant a meaning; and then the chief baker spoke, hoping to have an answer as good.

"In my dream," said the baker, "there were three baskets of white bread on my head, one above the other, and on the topmost basket were all kinds of roasted meat and food for Phā′raōh; and the birds came, and ate the food from the baskets on my head."

And Jō′şeph said to the baker:

"This is the meaning of your dream, and I am sorry to tell it to you. The three baskets are three days. In three days, by order of the king, you shall be lifted up, and hanged upon a tree; and the birds shall eat your flesh from your bones as you are hanging in the air."

And it came to pass, just as Jō'şeph had said. Three days after that, King Phā'raōh sent his officers to the prison. They came and took out both the chief butler and the chief baker. The baker they hung up by his neck to die, and left his body for the birds to pick in pieces. The chief butler they brought back to his old place, where he waited at the king's table, and handed him his wine to drink.

You would have supposed that the butler would remember Jō'şeph, who had given him the promise of freedom, and had shown such wisdom. But in his gladness, he forgot all about Jō'şeph. And two full years passed by, while Jō'şeph was still in prison, until he was a man thirty years old.

But one night, King Phā'raōh himself dreamed a dream, in fact two dreams in one. And in the morning he sent for all the wise men of Ē'ġ̆ypt, and told them his dreams; but there was not a man who could give the meaning of them. And the king was troubled, for he felt that the dreams had some meaning, which it was important for him to know.

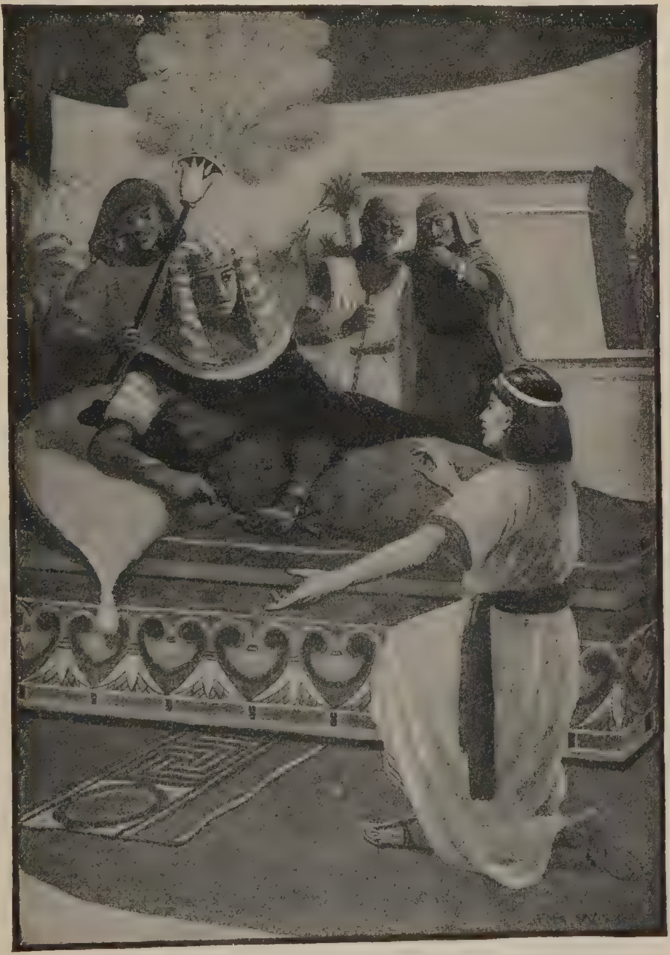
Then suddenly the chief butler, who was by the king's table, remembered his own dream, in the prison two years before, and remembered, too, the young man who had told its meaning so exactly. And he said:

"I do remember my faults this day. Two years ago King Phā'raōh was angry with his servants, with me and the chief baker, and he sent us to the prison. While we were in the prison, one night each of us dreamed a dream, and the next day a young man in the prison, a Hē'brew from the land of Cā'năan, told us what our dreams meant; and in three days they came true, just as the Hē'brew had said. I think that, if this young man is in the prison still, he could tell the king the meaning of his dreams."

You notice that the butler spoke of Jō'şeph as "a Hē'brew." The people of Ĭş'ra-el, to whom Jō'şeph belonged, were called Hē'brews as well as Ĭş'ra-el-ītes. The word Hē'brew means "one who crossed over," and was given to the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes because Ā'bră-hăm their father had come from a land on the other side of the river Eū-phrā'tēş, and had crossed over the river on his way to Cā'năan.

Then King Phā'raōh sent in haste to the prison for Jō'şeph; and Jō'şeph was taken out, and he was dressed in new garments, and was led in to Phā'raōh in the palace. And Phā'raōh said to

Jō′ṣeph: "I have dreamed a dream, and there is no one who can tell what it means. And I have been told that you have power to understand dreams and what they mean."



JŌ′ṢEPH BEFORE PHĀ′RAŌH.

And Jō′ṣeph answered Phā′raōh: "The power is not in me; but God will give Phā′raōh a good answer. What is the dream that the king has dreamed?"

"In my first dream," said Phā′raōh, "I was standing by the river; and I saw seven fat and handsome cows come up from the river to feed in the grass. And while they were feeding, seven other cows followed them up from the river, very thin, and poor, and lean, such miserable creatures as I had never seen. And the seven lean cows ate up the seven fat cows; and after they had eaten them, they were as lean and miserable as before. Then I awoke.

"And I fell asleep again, and dreamed again. In my second dream, I saw seven heads of grain growing upon one stalk, large, and strong, and good. And then seven heads came up after them, that were thin, and poor, and withered. And the seven thin heads swallowed up the seven good heads, and afterward were as poor and withered as before.

"And I told these two dreams to all the wise men, and there is no one who can tell me their meaning. Can you tell me what these dreams mean?"

And Jō'ṣeph said to the king:

"The two dreams have the same meaning. God has been showing to King Phā'raōh what he will do in this land. The seven good cows mean seven years, and the seven good heads of grain mean the same seven years. The seven lean cows, and the seven thin heads of grain also mean seven years. The good cows and the good grain mean seven years of plenty, and the seven thin cows and thin heads of grain mean seven poor years. There are coming upon the land of Ē'ġy̆pt seven years of such plenty as have never been seen; when the fields shall bring greater crops than ever before; and after those years shall come seven years when the fields shall bring no crops at all. And then for seven years there shall be such need, that the years of plenty will be forgotten, for the people will have nothing to eat.

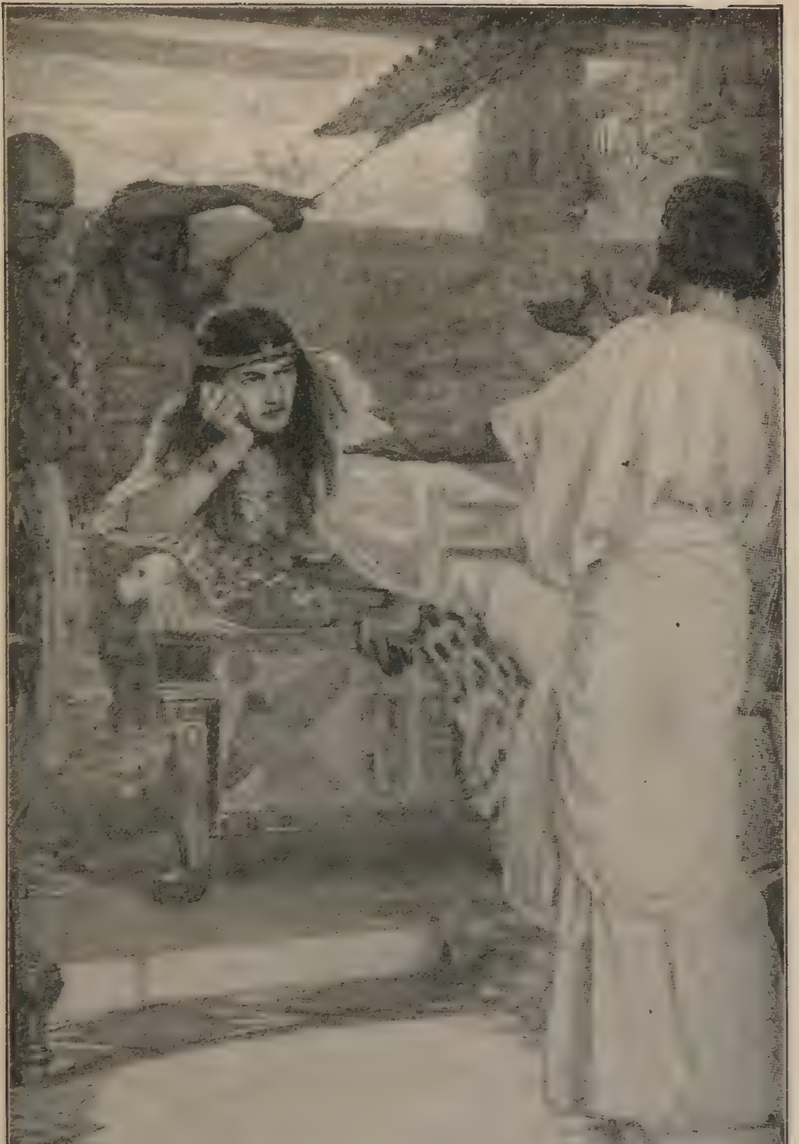
"Now, let King Phā'raōh find some man who is able and wise, and let him set this man to rule over the land. And during the seven years of plenty, let a part of the crops be put away for the years of need. If this shall be done, then when the years of need come there will be plenty of food for all the people, and no one will suffer, for all will have enough."

And King Phā'raōh said to Jō'ṣeph:

"Since God has shown you all this; there is no other man as wise as you. I will appoint you to do this work, and to rule over the land of Ē'ġy̆pt. All the people shall be under you; only on the throne of Ē'ġy̆pt, I will be above you."

And Phā'raōh took from his own hand the ring which held his seal, and put it on Jō'ṣeph's hand, so that he could sign for the king, and seal in the king's place. And he dressed Jō'ṣeph in robes of fine linen, and put around his neck a gold chain. And he made Jō'ṣeph ride in a chariot which was next in rank to his

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



JŌ'ŞEPH TELLING PHĀ'RAŌH THE MEANING OF HIS DREAM own. And they cried out before Jōşeph, "Bow the knee." And thus Jōşeph was ruler over all the land of Ēġy̆pt.

So the slave boy, who was sent to prison without deserving it, came out of prison to be a prince and a master over all the land. You see that God had not forgotten Jōşeph, even when he seemed to have left him to suffer.

Story Seventeen

HOW JOSEPH'S DREAM CAME TRUE

Genesis xli : 46, to xlii : 38.

WHEN Jōşeph was made ruler over the land of Ēġy̆pt, he did just as he had always done. It was not Jōşeph's way to sit down and rest, and enjoy himself, and make others wait on him. He found his work at once, and began to do it faithfully and thoroughly. He went out over all the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, and saw how rich and abundant were the fields of grain, giving much more than the people could use for their own needs. He told the people not to waste it, but to save it for the coming time of need.

And he called upon the people to give him for the king, one bushel of grain out of every five, to be stored up. The people brought their grain, after taking for themselves as much as they needed; and Jōşeph stored it up in great store-houses in the cities; so much at last that no one could keep account of it.

The king of Ē′ġy̆pt gave a wife to Jō′şeph from the noble young women of his kingdom. Her name was Ăs′e-năth; and to Jō′şeph and his wife God gave two sons. The oldest son he named Mȧ-năs′seh, a word which means "making to forget."

"For," said Jō′şeph, "God has made me forget all my troubles, and my toil as a slave."

The second son he named Ē′phră-ĭm, a word that means "fruitful."

"Because," said Jō′şeph, "God has not only made the land fruitful, but he has made me fruitful in the land of my troubles."

The seven years of plenty soon passed by, and then came the years of need. In all the lands around people were hungry, and there was no food for them to eat; but in the land of Ē′ġy̆pt everybody had enough. Most of the people soon used up the grain that they had saved: many had saved none at all, and they all cried to the king to help them.

"Go to Jō′şeph," said King Phā′raōh, "and do whatever he tells you to do."

Then the people came to Jō′şeph, and Jō′şeph opened the storehouses, and sold to the people all the grain that they wished to buy. And not only the people of Ē′ġy̆pt came to buy grain, but people of all the lands around as well, for there was great need and famine everywhere.

PLOWING IN BIBLE TIME.

And the need was as great in the land of Cā′năan, where Jā′cob lived, as in other lands. Jā′cob was rich in flocks and cattle, and gold and silver; but his fields gave no grain, and there was danger that his family and his people would starve. And Jā′cob,—who was now called Ĭş′ra-el also,—heard that there was food in Ē′ġy̆pt, and he said to his sons:

"Why do you look at each other, asking what to do to find food? I have been told that there is grain in Ē′ġy̆pt. Go down to that land, and take money with you, and buy grain, so that we may have bread, and may live."

Then the ten older brothers of Jō′şeph went down to the land of Ē′ġy̆pt. They rode upon asses, for horses were not much used in those times, and they brought money with them. But Jā′cob would not let Bĕn′ja-mĭn, Jō′şeph's younger brother, go with them, for he was all the more dear to his father, now that Jō′şeph was no longer with him; and Jā′cob feared that harm might come to him.

Then Jō′şeph's brothers came to Jō′şeph to buy food. They did not know him, grown up to be a man, dressed as a prince, and seated on a throne. Jō′şeph was now nearly forty years old, and it had been almost twenty-three years since they had sold him. But Jō′şeph knew them all, as soon as he saw them. He resolved to be sharp and stern with them, not because he hated them, but because he wished to see what their spirit was, and whether they were as selfish, and cruel, and wicked as they had been in other days.

They came before him, and bowed, with their faces to the ground. Then, no doubt, Jō′şeph thought of the dream that had come to him while he was a boy, of his brothers' sheaves bending down around his sheaf. He spoke to them as a stranger, as if he did not understand their language, and he had their words explained to him in the language of Ē′ġy̆pt.

"Who are you? And from what place do you come?" said Jō′şeph, in a harsh, stern manner.

They answered him, very meekly, "We have come from the land of Cā′năan to buy food."

"No," said Jō′şeph, "I know what you have come for. You have come as spies, to see how helpless the land is, so that you can bring an army against us, and make war on us."

"No, no," said Jō′şeph's ten brothers, "we are no spies, we are the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Cā′năan; and we have come for food, because we have none at home."

"You say you are the sons of one man, who is your father? Is he living? Have you any more brothers? Tell me all about yourselves."

And they said, "Our father is an old man in Cā′năan. We did have a younger brother, but he was lost; and we have one brother still, who is the youngest of all, but his father could not spare him to come with us."

"No," said Jō'şeph, "you are not good, honest men. You are spies. I shall put you all in prison, except one of you; and he shall go and bring that youngest brother of yours; and when I see him, then I will believe that you tell the truth."

So Jō'şeph put all the ten men in prison, and kept them under guard for three days; then he sent for them again. They did not know that he could understand their language, and they said to each other, while Jō'şeph heard, but pretended not to hear:

"This has come upon us because of the wrong that we did to our brother Jō'şeph, more than twenty years ago. We heard him cry, and plead with us when we threw him into the pit, and we would not have mercy on him. God is giving us only what we have deserved."

And Reu̦'ben, who had tried to save Jō'şeph, said, "Did I not tell you not to harm the boy? and you would not listen to me. God is bringing our brother's blood upon us all."

When Jō'şeph heard this, his heart was touched, for he saw that his brothers were really sorry for the wrong that they had done him. He turned away from them, so that they could not see his face, and he wept. Then he turned again to them, and spoke roughly as before, and said:

"This I will do, for I serve God, I will let you all go home, except one man. One of you I will shut up in prison; but the rest of you can go home, and take food for your people. And you must come back, and bring your youngest brother with you, and I shall know then that you have spoken the truth."

Then Jō'şeph gave orders, and his servants seized one of his brothers, whose name was Sĭm'e-on, and bound him in their sight, and took him away to prison. And he ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, and to put every man's money back into the sack before it was tied up, so that they would find the money as soon as they opened the sack. Then the men loaded their asses with the sacks of grain, and started to go home, leaving their brother Sĭm'e-on a prisoner.

When they stopped on the way to feed their asses, one of the brothers opened his sack, and there he found his money lying on the top of the grain. He called out to his brothers, "See, here is my money given again to me!" And they were frightened; but they did not dare to go back to Ē′ġy̆pt, and meet the stern ruler of the land. They went home, and told their old father all that had happened to them; and how their brother Sĭm′e-on was in prison, and must stay there until they should return, bringing Bĕn′ja-mĭn with them.

When they opened their sacks of grain, there, in the mouth of each sack, was the money that they had given; and they were filled with fear. Then they spoke of going again to Ē′ġy̆pt, and taking Bĕn′ja-mĭn, but Jā′cob said to them:

"You are taking my sons away from me. Jō′ṣeph is gone, and Sĭm′e-on is gone, and now you would take Bĕn′ja-mĭn away. All these things are against me!"

Reṳ′ben said, "Here are my own two boys. You may kill them, if you wish, in case I do not bring Bĕn′ja-mĭn back to you."

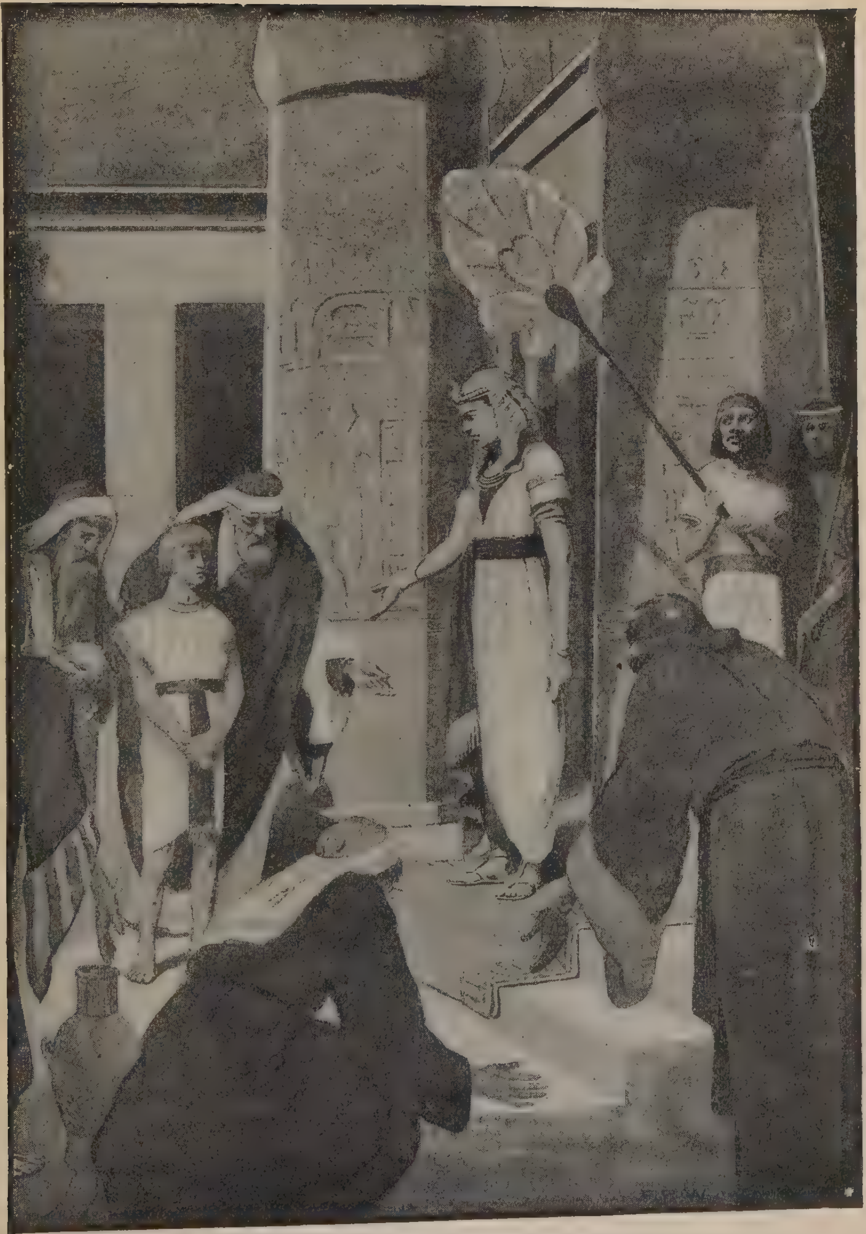
But Jā′cob said, "My youngest son shall not go with you. His brother is dead, and he alone is left to me. If harm should come to him, it would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Story Eighteen

A LOST BROTHER FOUND

Genesis xliii : 1, to xlv : 24.

THE food which Jā′cob's sons had brought from Ē′ġy̆pt did not last long, for Jā′cob's family was large. Most of his sons were married and had children of their own; so that the children and grand-children were sixty-six, besides the servants who waited on them, and the men who cared for Jā′cob's flocks. So around the tent of Jā′cob was quite a camp of other tents and an army of people.



BĔN'JA-MĬN IS BROUGHT TO JŌ'ȘEPH.

When the food that had come from Ē′ġy̆pt was nearly eaten up, Jā′cob said to his sons:

"Go down to Ē′ġy̆pt again, and buy some more food for us."

And Jū′dah, Jācob's son, the man who years before had urged his brothers to sell Jō′ṣeph to the Ĭsh′ma-el-ītes, said to his father:

"It is of no use for us to go to Ē′ġy̆pt, unless we take Bĕn′ja-mĭn with us. The man who rules in that land said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your youngest brother be with you.'"

Ĭṣ′ra-el said, "Why did you tell the man that you had a brother? You did me great harm when you told him."

"Why," said Jā′cob's sons, "we could not help telling him. The man asked us all about our family. Is your father yet living? Have you any more brothers? and we had to tell him, his questions were so close. How should we know that he would say, 'Bring your brother here for me to see him.'"

And Jū′dah said, "Send Bĕn′ja-mĭn with me, and I will take care of him. I promise you, that I will bring him safely home. If he does not come back, let me bear the blame forever. He must go, or we shall die for want of food; and we might have gone down to Ē′ġy̆pt and come home again, if we had not been kept back."

And Jā′cob said, "If he must go, then he must. But take a present to the man, some of the choicest fruits of the land, some spices, and perfumes, and nuts, and almonds. And take twice as much money, besides the money that was in your sacks. Perhaps that was a mistake, when the money was given back to you. And take your brother Bĕn′ja-mĭn; and may the Lord God make the man kind to you, so that he will set Sĭm′e-on free, and let you bring Bĕn′ja-mĭn back. But if it is God's will that I lose my children, I cannot help it."

So ten brothers of Jō′ṣeph went down a second time to Ē′ġy̆pt, Bĕn′ja-mĭn going in place of Sĭm′e-on. They came to Jō-ṣeph's office, the place where he sold grain to the people; and they stood before their brother, and bowed as before. Jō′ṣeph saw that Bĕn′ja-mĭn was with them, and he said to his steward, the man who was over his house: "Make ready a dinner, for all these men shall dine with me to-day."

When Jō′ṣeph's brothers found that they were taken into Jō′ṣeph's house, they were filled with fear; they said to each other:

"We have been taken here on account of the money in our sacks. They will say that we have stolen; and then they will sell us all for slaves."

But Jō′ṣeph's steward, the man who was over his house, treated the men kindly, and when they spoke of the money in their sacks, he would not take it again, saying: "Never fear; your God must have sent you this as a gift. I had your money." The steward received the men into Jō′ṣeph's house, and washed their feet, according to the custom of the land. And at noon, Jō′ṣeph came in to meet them. They brought him the present from their father, and again they bowed before him, with their faces on the ground.

And Jō′ṣeph asked them if they were well, and said: "Is your father still living, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he well?"

And they said, "Our father is well, and he is living." And again they bowed to Jō′ṣeph. And Jō′ṣeph looked at his younger brother, Bĕn′ja-mĭn, the child of his own mother, Rā′chel; and he said: "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious unto you, my son."

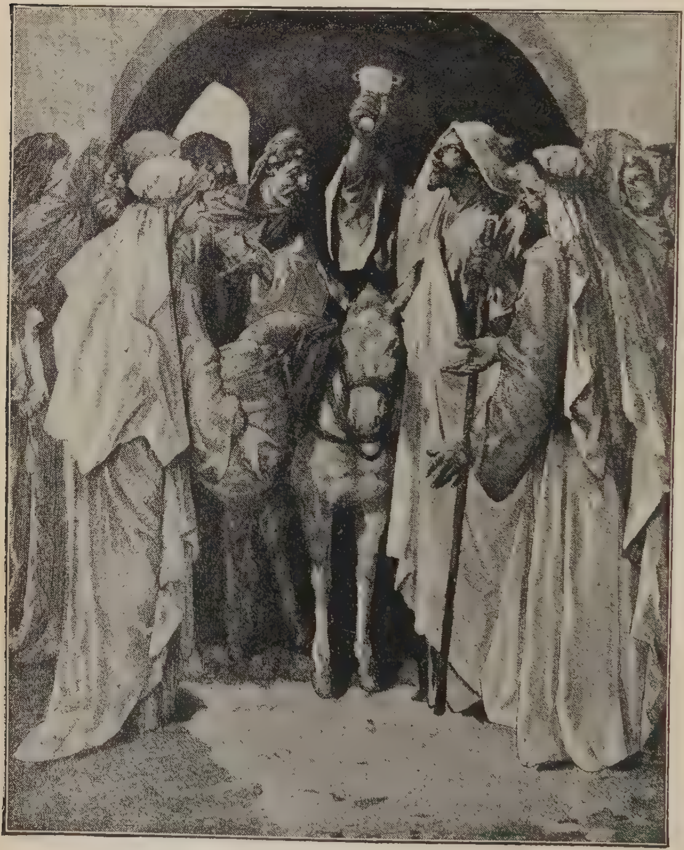
And Jō′ṣeph's heart was so full that he could not keep back his tears. He went in haste to his own room, and wept there. Then he washed his face, and came out again, and ordered the table to be set for dinner. They set Jō′ṣeph's table for himself, as the ruler, and another table for his Ē-ġy̆p′tian officers, and another for the eleven men from Cā′năan; for Jō′ṣeph had brought Sĭm′e-on out of the prison, and had given him a place with his brothers.

Jō′ṣeph himself arranged the order of the seats for his brothers, the oldest at the head; and all in order of age down to the youngest. The men wondered at this, and could not see how the ruler of Ē′ġy̆pt should know the order of their ages. And Jō′ṣeph sent dishes from his table to his brothers; and he gave to Bĕn′ja-mĭn five times as much as to the others. Perhaps he wished to see whether they were as jealous of Bĕn′ja-mĭn as in other days they had been toward him.

After dinner, Jō-ṣeph said to his steward, "Fill the men's sacks with grain, as much as they can carry; and put each man's money in his sack. And put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest, with his money."

The steward did as Jō′ṣeph had said; and early in the morning the brothers started to go home. A little while afterward, Jō′ṣeph said to his steward:

"Hasten, follow after the men from Cā′năan, and say, 'Why have you wronged me, after I had treated you kindly? You have stolen my master's silver cup, out of which he drinks.'" The steward followed the men, and overtook them, and charged them with stealing. And they said to him:



THE CUP WAS FOUND IN THE SACK OF BĔN′JA-MĬN.

"Why should you talk to us in this manner? We have stolen nothing. Why, we brought back to you the money that we found in our sacks; and is it likely that we would steal from your lord his silver or gold? You may search us; and if you find your master's cup on any of us, let him die, and the rest of us may be sold as slaves."

Then they took down the sacks from the asses, and opened them; and in each man's sack was his money, for the second time.

And when they came to Bĕn′ja-mĭn's sack, there was the ruler's silver cup! Then, in the greatest sorrow, they tied up their bags again, and laid them on the asses, and came back to Jō′seph's palace.

And Jō′ṣeph said to them:

"What wicked thing is this that you have done? Did you not know that I would surely find out your deeds?"

Then Jū′dah said, "O my lord, what can we say? God has punished us for our sins; and now we must all be slaves, both us that are older, and the youngest in whose sack the cup was found."

"No," said Jō′ṣeph, "only one of you is guilty, the one who has taken away my cup; I will hold him as a slave, and the rest of you can go home to your father."

Jō′ṣeph wished to see whether his brothers were still selfish, and were willing to let Bĕn′ja-mĭn suffer, if they could escape.

Then Jū′dah, the very man who had urged his brothers to sell Jō′ṣeph as a slave, came forward, and fell at Jō′ṣeph's feet, and pleaded with him to let Bĕn′ja-mĭn go. He told again the whole story, how Bĕn-ja′mĭn was the one whom his father loved the most of all his children, now that his brother was lost. He said:

"I promised to bear the blame, if this boy was not brought home in safety. If he does not go back, it will kill our poor old father, who has seen much trouble. Now let my youngest brother go home to his father, and I will stay here as a slave in his place!"

Jō′ṣeph knew now what he had longed to know, that his brothers were no longer cruel nor selfish, but one of them was willing to suffer, so that his brother might be spared. And Jō′ṣeph could not any longer keep his secret, for his heart longed after his brothers, and he was ready to weep again, with tears of love and joy. He sent all his Ê-gȳp′tian servants out of the room, so that he might be alone with his brothers, and then said:

"Come near to me, I wish to speak with you;" and they came near, wondering. Then Jō′ṣeph said:

"I am Jō′ṣeph; is my father really alive?" How frightened his brothers were, as they heard these words, spoken in their own language by the ruler of Ē′ġȳpt, and for the first time knew that this stern man, who had their lives in his hand, was their own brother whom they had wronged! Then Jō′ṣeph said again:

"I am Jō′ṣeph your brother, whom you sold into Ē′ġȳpt. But do not feel troubled because of what you did. For God sent me before you to save your lives. There have been already two years of need and famine, and there are to be five years more, when there shall neither be plowing of the fields nor harvest. It was not you who sent me here, but God, and he sent me to save your lives. God has made me like a father to Phā′raōh and ruler over all the land of Ē′ġy̆pt. Now, go home, and bring down to me my father and all his family, for that is the only way to save their lives."

Then Jō′şeph placed his arms around Bĕn′ja-mĭn's neck, and kissed him, and wept upon him. And Bĕn-ja-mĭn wept on his neck. And Jō′şeph kissed all his brothers, to show them that he had fully forgiven them; and after that his brothers began to lose their fear of Jō′şeph, and talked with him more freely.

Afterward Jō′şeph sent his brothers home with good news, and rich gifts, and abundant food. He sent also wagons in which Jā′cob and his wives and the little ones of his family might ride from Cā′năan down to Ē′ġy̆pt. And Jō′şeph's brothers went home happier than they had been for many years.

Story Nineteen

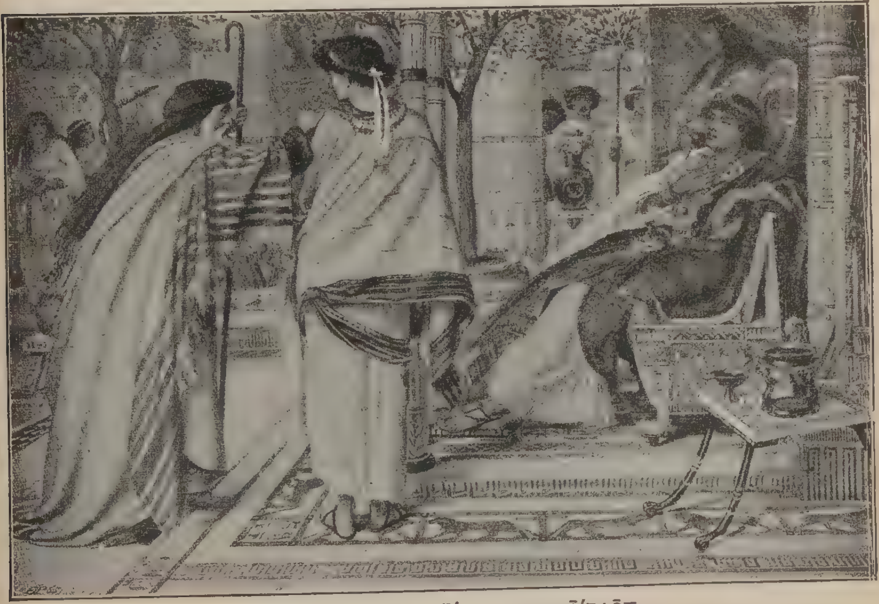
FROM THE LAND OF FAMINE TO THE LAND OF PLENTY

Genesis xlv : 25, to l : 26.

SO Jō′şeph's eleven brothers went home to their old father with the glad news that Jō′şeph was alive and was ruler over the land. It was such a joyful surprise to Jā′çob that he fainted. But after a time he revived; and when they showed him the wagons that Jō′şeph had sent to bring him and his family to Ē′ġy̆pt, old Jā′cob said, "It is enough; Jō′şeph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die."

Then they went on their journey, with their wives, and children, and servants, and sheep and cattle, a great company. They stopped to rest at Bē′er-shē′ba, which had been the home of Ĭ′ṣaac and of Ā′bră-hăm, and made offerings to the Lord, and worshipped. And that night the Lord appeared to Jā′cob, and said to him:

"Jā′cob, I am the Lord, the God of your father, fear not to go down to Ē′ġy̆pt; for I will go down with you; and there you shall see your son Jō′ṣeph; and in Ē′ġy̆pt I will make of your descendants, those that come from you, a great people; and I will surely bring them back again to this land."



JŌ′ṢEPH BRINGS JĀ′COB TO PHĀ′RAŌH.

They came down to Ē′ġy̆pt, sixty-six of Jā′cob's children and grand-children. Jō′ṣeph rode in his chariot to meet his father, and fell on his neck, and wept upon him. And Jā′cob said, "Now, I am ready to die, since I know that you are still alive; and I have seen your face." And Jō′ṣeph brought his father in to see King Phā′raōh; and Jā′cob, as an old man, gave his blessing to the king.

The part of the land of Ē′ġy̆pt where Jō′ṣeph found for his brothers a home, was called Gō′shen. It was on the east, between

Ē′ġy̆pt and the desert, and it was a very rich land, where the soil gave large harvests. But at that time, and for five years after, there were no crops, because of the famine that was in the land. During those years, the people of Ĭş′ra-el in the land of Gō′shen were fed as were all the people of Ē′ġy̆pt, with grain from the storehouses of Jō′şeph.

Jā′cob lived to be almost a hundred and fifty years old. Before he died he blessed Jō′şeph and all his sons, and said to them:

"When I die, do not bury me in the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, but take my body to the land of Cā′năan, and bury me in the cave at Hē′bron, with Ā′bră-hăm, and Ī′şaac my father."

And Jō′şeph brought his two sons, Mȧ-năs′seh and Ē′phră-ĭm, to his father's bed, Jā′cob's eyes were dim with age, as his father Ī′şaac had been, and he could not see the two young men. And he said, "Who are these?"

And Jō′şeph said, "They are my two sons, whom God has given me in this land."

"Bring them to me," said Jā′cob, "that I may bless them before I die."

And Jā′cob kissed them, and put his arms around them, and he said:

"I had not thought that I should ever see your face, my son; and God has let me see both you and your children also."

And Jā′cob placed his right hand on Ē′phră-ĭm's head, the younger, and his left hand on Mȧ-năs′seh the older. Jō′şeph tried to change his father's hands, so that his right hand should be on the older son's head. But Jā′cob would not allow him, and he said:

"I know what I am doing, God will bless the older son; but the greater blessing shall be with the younger, for his descendants, those who spring from him, shall be greater and stronger than the descendants of his brother."

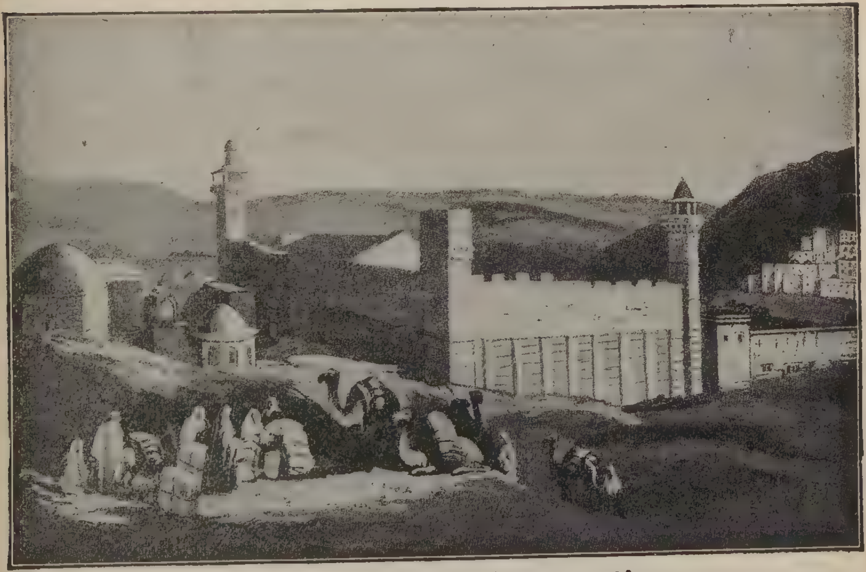
And so it came to pass many years after this; for the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, the younger son, became greater and more powerful than the tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh, the older son.

When Jā′cob died a great funeral was held. They carried his body up out of Ē′ġy̆pt to the land of Cā′năan, and buried it,—as he had said to them,—in the cave of Măch-pē′lah, where Ā′bră-hăm and Ī′şaac were buried already.

When the sons of Jā'cob came to Ē'ġy̆pt after the burial of their father, they said one to another:

"It may be that Jō'şeph will punish us, now that his father is dead, for the wrong that we did to him many years ago."

And they sent a message, asking Jō'şeph to forgive them, for his father's sake. And again they came and bowed down before him, with their faces to the ground; they said, "We are your servants; be merciful to us."



THE TOMB OF Ā'BRĂ-HĂM, Ī'ŞAAC AND JĀ'COB.

Jō'şeph wept when his brothers spoke to him, and he said:

"Fear not. Am I in God's place to punish and to reward? It is true that you meant evil to me, but God turned it to good, so that all your families might be kept alive. Do not be afraid; I will care for you, and for your children."

After this Jō'şeph lived to a good old age, until he was a hundred and ten years old. Before he died he said to his children, and to all the children of Ĭş'ra-el, who had now increased to very many people:

"I am going to die; but God will come to you, and will bring you up out of this land, into your own land, which he promised to your fathers, to Ā'bră-hăm, and Ī'şaac, and Jā'cob. When I die do not bury me in Ē'ġy̆pt, but keep my body until you go out of this land, and take it with you."

So when Jō'şeph died they embalmed his body, as the Ē-ġy̆p'tianş embalmed the dead; so that the body would not decay, and they placed his body in a stone coffin, and kept it in the land of Gō'shen among the people of Ĭş'ra-el. Thus Jō'şeph not only showed his faith in God's promise, that he would bring his people back to the land of Cā'năan; but he also encouraged the faith of those who came after him. For as often as the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes looked on the stone coffin that held the body of Jō'şeph, they said to one another:

"There is the token, the sign, that this land is not our home. This coffin will not be buried until we bury it in our own land, the land of Cā'năan, where God will lead us in his own time."

Story Twenty

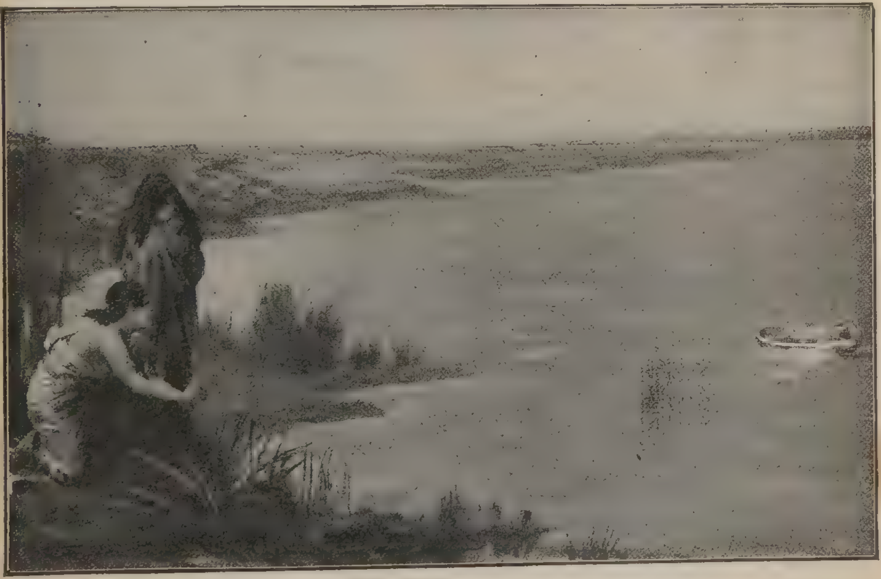
THE BEAUTIFUL BABY WHO WAS FOUND IN A RIVER

Exodus i : 1, to ii : 22.

THE children of Ĭş'ra-el stayed in the land of Ē'ġy̆pt much longer than they had expected to stay. They were in that land about four hundred years. And the going down to Ē'ġy̆pt proved a great blessing to them. It saved their lives during the years of famine and need. After the years of need were over, they found the soil in the land of Gō'shen, that part of Ē'ġy̆pt where they were living, very rich, so that they could gather three or four crops every year.

Then, too, some of the sons of Ĭş′ra-el, before they came to Ē′ġỹpt, had begun to marry the women in the land of Cā′năan, who worshipped idols, and not the Lord. If they had stayed there, their children would have grown up like the people around them, and soon would have lost all knowledge of God.

But in Gō′shen, they lived alone and apart from the people of Ē′ġỹpt. They worshipped the Lord God, and were kept away from the idols of Ē′ġỹpt. And in that land, as the years went on, from being seventy people, they grew in number, until they became a great multitude. Each of the twelve sons of Jā′cob was the father of a tribe, and Jō′şeph was the father of two tribes, which were named after his two sons, Ē′phră-ĭm and Mă-năs′seh.



THE BABY IN THE ARK FLOATS DOWN THE RIVER.

As long as Jō′şeph lived, and for some time after, the people of Ĭş′ra-el were treated kindly by the Ē-ġỹp′tianş, out of their love for Jō′şeph, who had saved Ē′ġỹpt from suffering by famine. But, after a long time another king began to rule over Ē′ġỹpt, who cared nothing for Jō′şeph or Jō′şeph's people. He saw that the

Ĭş′ra-el-ītes (as the children of Ĭş′ra-el were called) were very many; and he feared lest they would soon become greater in number and in power than the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş.

He said to his people, "Let us rule these Ĭş′ra-el-ītes more strictly. They are growing too strong."

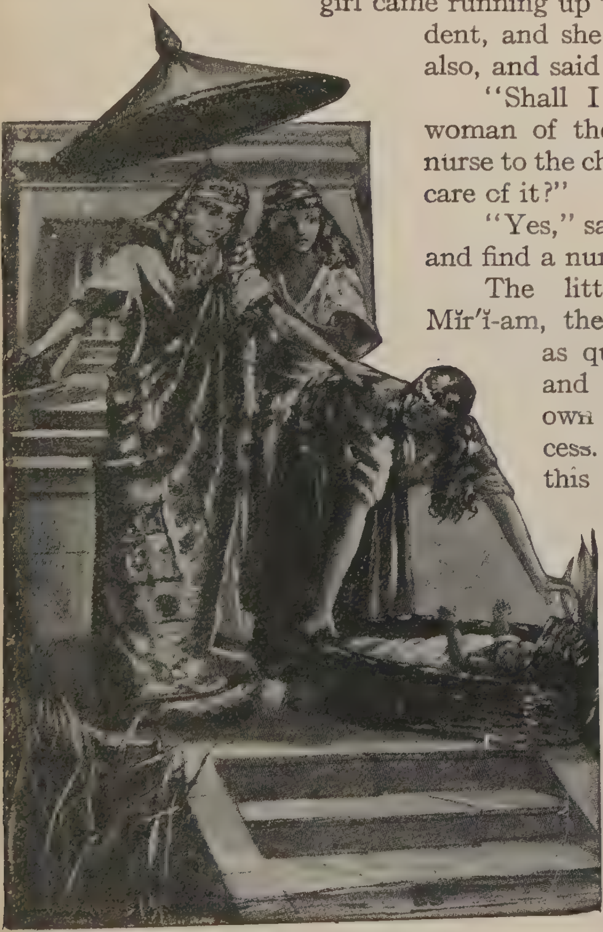
Then they set harsh rulers over the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, who laid heavy burdens on them. They made the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes work hard for the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş, and build cities for them, and give to the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş a large part of the crops from their fields. They set them at work in making brick. and in building store-houses. They were so afraid that the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes would grow in number, that they gave orders to kill all the little boys that were born to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes; though their little girls might be allowed to live.

But in the face of all this hate, and wrong, and cruelty, the people of Ĭş′ra-el were growing in numbers, and becoming greater and greater.

At this time, when the wrongs of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were the greatest, and when their little children were being killed, one little boy was born. He was such a lovely child that his mother kept him hid, so that the enemies did not find him. When she could no longer hide him, she found a plan to save his life, believing that God would help her and save her beautiful little boy She made a little box like a boat, and covered it with something that would not let the water into it. Such a boat as this, covered over, was called "an ark." She knew that at certain times the daughter of King Phā′raōh,—all the kings of Ē′ġy̆pt were called Phā′raōh,—would come down to the river for a bath. She placed her baby boy in the ark, and let it float down the river where the princess, Phā′raōh's daughter, would see it. And she sent her own daughter, a little girl named Mĭr′ĭ-am, twelve years old, to watch close at hand. How anxious the mother and the sister were as they saw the little ark floating away from them on the river.

Phā′raōh's daughter, with her maids, came down to the river; and they saw the ark floating on the water, among the reeds. She sent one of her maids to bring it to her, so that she might see what was in the curious box. They opened it, and there was a beautiful little baby, who began to cry to be taken up.

The princess felt kind toward the little one, and loved it at once. She said: "This is one of the Hē′brewş′ children." You have heard how the children of Ĭş′ra-el came to be called Hē′brewş. Phā′raōh's daughter thought that it would be cruel to let such a lovely baby as this die out on the water. And just then a little girl came running up to her, as if by accident, and she looked at the baby also, and said:



THE PRINCESS FINDS THE BABY.

"Shall I go and find some woman of the Hē′brewş to be a nurse to the child for you, and take care of it?"

"Yes," said the princess, "go and find a nurse for me."

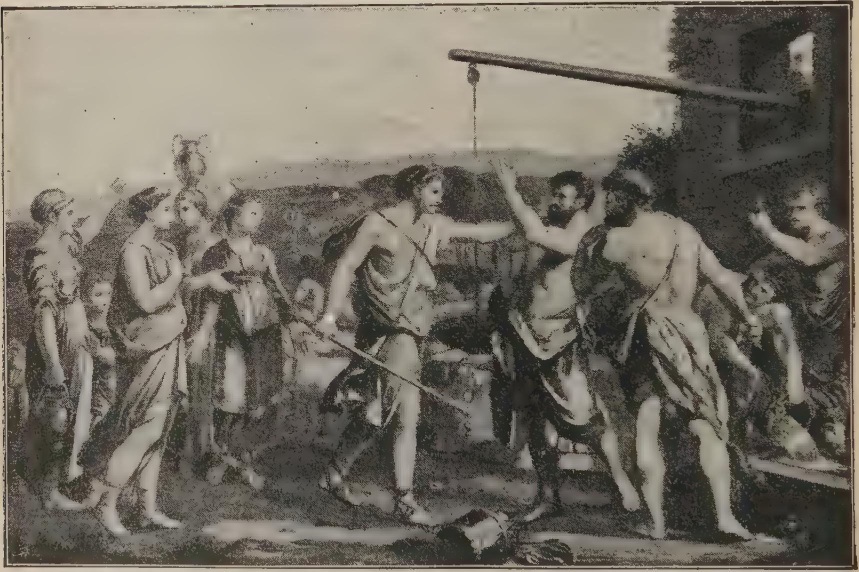
The little girl,—who was Mĭr′ĭ-am, the baby's sister,—ran as quickly as she could, and brought the baby's own mother to the princess. Mĭr′ĭ-am showed in this act that she was a wise and thoughtful little girl. The princess said to the little baby's mother:

"Take this child to your home and nurse it for me, and I will pay you wages for it."

How glad the Hē′brew mother was to take her child home! No one could harm her boy now, for he was protected by the princess of Ē′ġy̆pt, the daughter of the king.

When the child was large enough to leave his mother, Phā′raōh's daughter took him into her own home in the palace. She named him "Mō′şeş," a word that means "Drawn out," because he was drawn out of the water.

So Mō′şeş, the Hē′brew boy, lived in the palace among the nobles of the land, as the son of the princess. There he learned much more than he could have learned among his own people; for there were very wise teachers among the Ḗ-ġȳ̆p′tianş. Mō′şeş gained all the knowledge that the Ḗ-ġȳ̆p′tianş had to give. There in the court of the cruel king who had made slaves of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, God's people, was growing up an Ĭş′ra-el-īte boy who should at some time set his people free.



MŌ′ŞEŞ DROVE OFF THE ROUGH MEN.

Although, Mō′şeş grew up among the Ḗ-ġȳ̆p′tianş, and gained their learning, he loved his own people. They were poor and were hated, and were slaves, but he loved them, because they were the people who served the Lord God, while the Ḗ-ġȳ̆p′tianş worshipped idols and animals. Strange it was that so wise a people as these should bow down and pray to an ox, or to a cat, or to a snake, as did the Ḗ-ġȳ̆p′tianş!

When Mō′şeş became a man, he went among his own people, leaving the riches and ease that he might have enjoyed among the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş. He felt a call from God to lift up the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, and set them free. But at that time he found that he could do nothing to help them. They would not let him lead them, and as the king of Ē′ġy̆pt had now become his enemy, Mō′şeş went away from Ē′ġy̆pt, into a country in Ā-rā′bĭ-ȧ called Mĭd′ĭ-an.

He was sitting by a well, in that land, tired from his long journey, when he saw some young women come to draw water for their flocks of sheep. But some rough men came and drove the women away, and took the water for their own flocks. Mō′şeş saw it, and helped the women, and drew the water for them.

These young women were sisters, the daughters of a man named Jĕth′rō, who was a priest in the land of Mĭd′ĭ-an. He asked Mō′şeş to live with him, and to help him in the care of his flocks. Mō′şeş stayed with Jĕth′rō, and married one of his daughters. So from being a prince in the king's palace in Ē′ġy̆pt, Mō′şeş became a shepherd in the wilderness of Mĭd′ĭ-an.

Story Twenty-one

THE VOICE FROM THE BURNING BUSH

Exodus iii : 1, to iv : 31.

IT must have been a great change in the life of Mō′şeş, after he had spent forty years in the palace as a prince, to go out into the wilderness of Mĭd′ĭ-an, and live there as a shepherd. He saw no more the crowded cities, the pyramids, the temples of Ē′ġy̆pt, and the great river Nile. For forty years Mō′şeş wandered about the land of Mĭd′ĭ-an with his flocks, living alone, often sleeping at night on the ground, and looking up by day to the great mountains.

He wore the rough skin mantle of a shepherd; and in his hand was the long shepherd's staff. On his feet were sandals which he wore instead of shoes. But when he stood before an altar to worship God he took off his sandals. For when we take off our hats, as in church or a place where God is worshipped, the people of those lands take off their shoes, as a sign of reverence in a sacred place.

Mō′şeş was a great man, one of the greatest men that ever lived. But he did not think himself great or wise. He was contented with the work that he was doing; and sought no higher place. But God had a work for Mō′şeş to do, and all through those years in the wilderness God was preparing him for that work.

All through those years, while Mō′şeş was feeding his flock in Mĭd′ĭ-an, the people of Ĭş′ra-el were still bearing heavy burdens and working as slaves in Ē′ġy̆pt, making brick and building cities. The king who had begun the hard treatment of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes died, but another king took his place, and was just as cruel. He was called by the same name, Phā′raōh, for this was the name given to all the kings of Ē′ġy̆pt.

One day, Mō′şeş was feeding his flock on a mountain, called Mount Hō′reb. This mountain was also called Mount Sī′nāi, and is spoken of by both names in the Bible. On the mountain Mō′şeş saw a bush which seemed to be on fire. He watched to see it burn up, but it was not destroyed, though it kept burning on and on. And Mō′şeş said to himself:

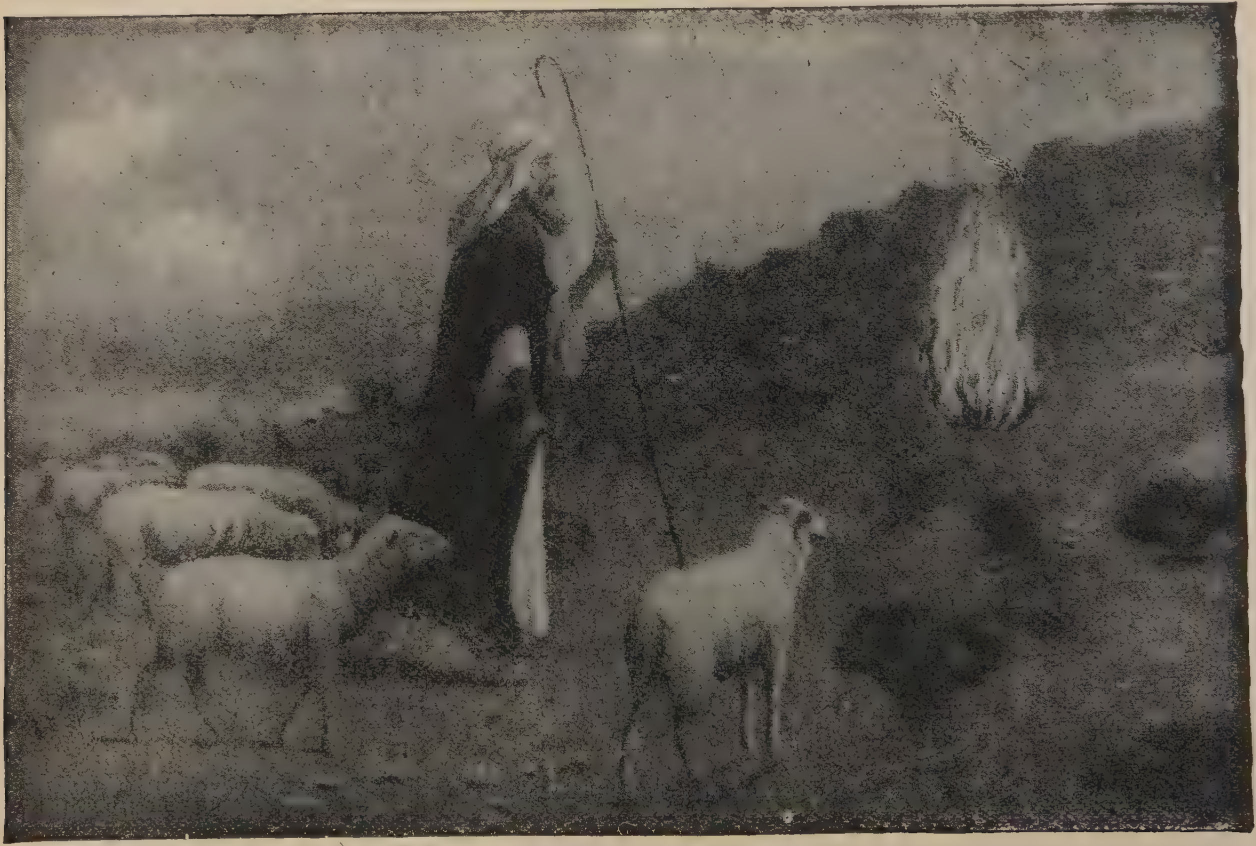
"I will go and look at this strange thing, a bush on fire, yet not burning up."

As Mō′şeş was going toward the bush, he heard a voice coming out of the bush, calling him by name, "Mō′şeş, Mō′şeş!" He listened, and said, "Here I am."

The voice said, "Mō′şeş, do not come near; but take off your shoes from your feet, for you are standing on holy ground."

So Mō′şeş took off his shoes, and came near to the burning bush. And the voice came from the bush, saying:

"I am the God of your father, the God of Ā′bră-hăm, and of Ī′şaac, and of Jā′cob. I have seen the wrongs and the cruelty that my people have suffered in Ē′ġy̆pt, and I have heard their cry on account of their task-masters. And I am coming to set them free from the land of the Ē̇-ġy̆p′tianş, and to bring them up to their own land, the land of Cā′năan, a good land, and large. Come,



MŌ'ŞEŞ SEES THE BUSH ON FIRE.

now, and I will send you to Phā′raōh, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt, and you shall lead out my people from Ē′ġy̆pt."

Mō′şeş knew what a great work this would be, to lead the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes out of Ē′ġy̆pt, from the power of its king. He dreaded to take up such a task; and he said to the Lord:

"O Lord, who am I, a shepherd here in the wilderness, to do this great work, to go to Phā′raōh, and to bring the people out of Ē′ġy̆pt? It is too great a work for me."

And God said to Mō′şeş:

"Surely I will be with you, and will help you to do this great work. I will give you a sign of my presence with you. When you have led my people out of Ē′ġy̆pt, you shall bring them to this mountain, and they shall worship me here. And then you shall know that I have been with you."

And Mō′şeş said to God:

"When I go to the children of Ĭş′ra-el in Ē′ġy̆pt, and tell them that the God of their fathers has sent me, they will say to me, 'Who is this God? What is his name?' For they have suffered so much, and have sunk so low, that I fear they have forgotten their God."

You remember that Mō′şeş had been out of Ē′ġy̆pt and afar from his people for forty years, a long time, and in that time he did not know whether they had continued the worship of God.

And God said to Mō′şeş:

"My name is 'I AM,' the One who is always living. Do you go to your people and say to them, 'I AM hath sent me to you.' Do not be afraid; go to your people, and say to them what I have said to you, and they will listen to you and believe. And you shall take the elders of your tribes, the leading men among them, and shall go to King Phā′raōh, and shall say to him, 'Let my people go, that they may worship me in the wilderness.' At first he will not let you go; but afterward, I will show my power in Ē′ġy̆pt, and then he will let you go out of the land."

But Mō′şeş wished some sign, which he could give to his people, and to the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş, to show them that God had sent him. He asked God to give him some sign. And God said to him:

"What is that which you have in your hand?" Mō′şeş said, "It is a rod, my shepherd's staff, which I use to guide the sheep."

And God said, "Throw it on the ground." Then Mō′şeş threw it down, and instantly it was turned into a snake. Mō′şeş was afraid of it, and began to run from it.

And God said, "Do not fear it, but take hold of it by the tail." Mō′şeş did so, and at once it became again a rod in his hand.

And God said again to Mō′şeş, "Put your hand into your bosom, under your garment, and take it out again."

Then Mō′şeş put his hand under his garment, and when he took it out it had changed, and was now as white as snow, and covered with a scaly crust, like the hand of a leper. He looked at it with fear and horror. But God said to him again:

"Put your hand into your bosom once more." Mō′şeş did so, and when he took it out, his hand was like the other, with a pure skin, no longer like a leper's hand.

And God said to Mō′şeş, "When you go to speak my words, if they will not believe you, show them the first sign, and let your rod become a snake, and then a rod again. And if they still refuse to believe your words, show them the second sign; turn your hand into a leper's hand, and then bring it back as it was before. And if they still will not believe, then take some water from the river, and it shall turn to blood. Fear not, go and speak my words to your own people and to the Ê-ġ̆ўp′tianş."

But Mō′şeş was still unwilling to go, not because he was afraid, but because he did not feel himself to be fit for such a great task. And he said to the Lord:

"O Lord, thou knowest that I am not a good speaker; I am slow of speech, and cannot talk before men."

And God said, "Am not I the Lord, who made man's mouth? Go, and I will be with your lips, and will teach you what to say."

But Mō′şeş still hesitated, and he said, "O Lord, choose some other man for this great work; I am not able to do it."

And God said, "You have a brother, whose name is Âar′on. He can speak well. Even now he is coming to see you in the wilderness. Let him help you, and speak for you. Let him do the speaking, and do you show the signs which I have given you."

At last Mō′şeş yielded to God's call. He went from Mount Sī′nāi with his flocks, and took them home to Jĕth′rō his father-in-law; and then he went toward Ē′ġ̆ўpt, and on the way he met his brother coming to see him. Then the two brothers, Mō′şeş and Âar′on, came to the elders of Ĭş′ra-el in the land of Gō′shen. They told the people what God had said, and they wrought before them the signs which God had given.

And the people said, "God has seen all our troubles, and at last he is coming to set us free." And they were glad, and gave thanks to God who had not forgotten them; for God never forgets those who call upon him.

Story Twenty-two

THE RIVER THAT RAN BLOOD

Exodus vi : 28, to x : 29.

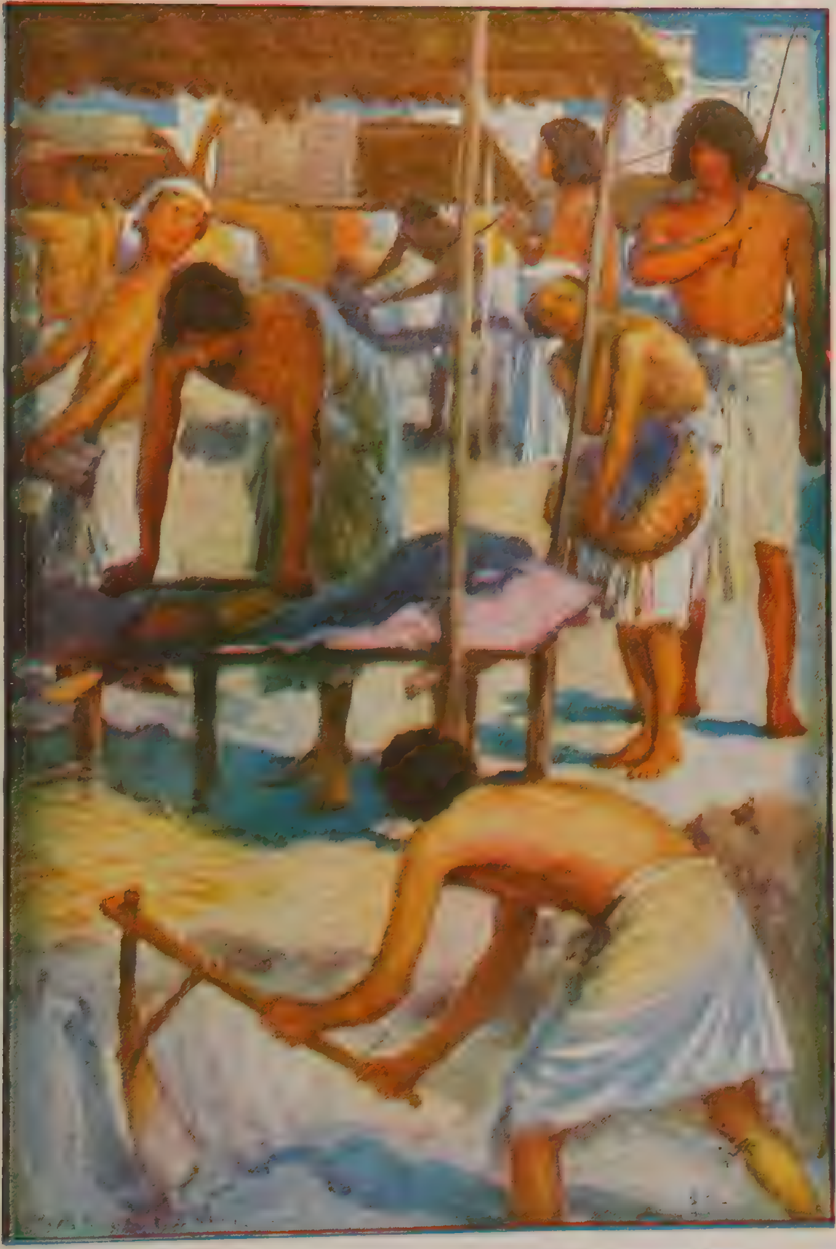
AFTER Mō´şeş and Aâr´on had spoken to the people of Ĭş´ra-el the words which God had given them, they went to meet Phā´raōh the king of Ē´gy̆pt. You remember that all the kings of Ē´gy̆pt bore the name of Phā´raōh. Mō´şeş and Aâr´on did not at first ask Phā´raōh to let the people go out of Ē´gy̆pt, never to return, but they said:

"Our God, the Lord God of Ĭş´ra-el, has bidden us to go out, with all our people, a journey of three days into the wilderness, and there to worship him. And God speaks to you through us, saying, 'Let my people go, that they may serve me.'"

But Phā´raōh was very angry. He said, "What are you doing, you Mō´şeş and Aâr´on, to call your people away from their work? Go back to your tasks and leave your people alone. I know why the Ĭş´ra-el-ītes are talking about going out into the wilderness. It is because they have not work enough to keep them busy. I will give them more work to do."

The work of the Ĭş´ra-el-ītes, at that time, was mostly in making brick, and putting up the walls of buildings for the rulers of Ē´gy̆pt.

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WORKING FOR THE EGYPTIANS

In mixing the clay for the brick they used straw, chopped up fine, to hold the clay together. Phā′raōh said:

"Let them make as many bricks as before; but give them no straw. Let the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes find their own straw for the brick-making."

Of course this made their task all the harder, for it took much time to find the straw; and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were scattered all through the land finding straw and stubble, for use in making the brick; and yet they were called upon to bring as many brick each day as before. And when they could not do all their task they were cruelly beaten by the Ē-ġy̆p′tianş. Many of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes now became angry with Mō′şeş and Aâr′on, who, they thought, had brought more burden and trouble upon them. They said:

"May the Lord God judge you, and punish you! You promised to lead us out, and set us free; but you have only made our suffering the greater!"

Then Mō′şeş cried to the Lord, and the Lord said to him:

"Take Aâr′on, your brother, and go again to Phā′raōh; and show him the signs that I gave you."

So they went in to Phā′raōh, and again asked him in the Lord's name, to let the people go. And Phā′raōh said:

"Who is the Lord? Why should I obey his commands? What sign can you show that God has sent you?"

Then Aâr′on threw down his rod, and it was turned into a snake. But there were wise men in Ē′ġy̆pt who had heard of this; and they made ready a trick. They threw down their rods, and their rods became snakes, or seemed to. They may have been tame snakes, which they had hidden under their long garments, and then brought out, as if they had been rods.

But Aâr′on's rod, in the form of a snake, ran after them, and swallowed them all; and then it became a rod again in Aâr′on's hand. But King Phā′raōh refused to obey God's voice.

Then Mō′şeş spoke to Aâr′on, by God's command: "Take your rod and wave it over the waters of Ē′ġy̆pt, over the river Nile, and the canals, and the lakes."

Then Aâr′on did so. He lifted up the rod, and struck the water, in the sight of Phā′raōh. And in a moment all the water turned to blood, and the fish in the river all died; and a terrible stench, a foul smell, arose over the land. And the people were in danger of dying. But in the land of Gō′shen, where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were, the water remained as it had been, and was not turned to blood. So God made a difference between Ĭş′ra-el and Ē′ġy̆pt.

The people of Ē′ġy̆pt dug wells, to find water; and the wise men of Ē′ġy̆pt brought some water to Phā′raōh, and made it look as though they had turned it to blood. And Phā′raōh would not listen, nor let the people go.

After seven days Mō′şeş took away the plague of blood, but he warned Phā′raōh that another plague was coming, if he refused to obey. And as Phā′raōh still would not obey, Aâr′on stretched forth his rod again, and then all the land was covered with frogs. Like a great army they ran over all the fields, and they even filled the houses. Phā′raōh said:

"Pray to your God for me; ask him to take the frogs away, and I will let the people go."

Then Mō′şeş prayed; and God took away the frogs. They died everywhere; and the Ê-ġy̆p′tianş heaped them up and buried them. But Phā′raōh broke his promise, and would not let the people go.

Then, at God's command by Mō′şeş, Aâr′on lifted his rod again, and struck the dust; and everywhere the dust became alive with lice and fleas. But still Phā′raōh would not hear, and God sent great swarms and clouds of flies all over the land, so that their houses were filled with them, and the sky was covered. But where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes lived there were no lice, nor fleas, nor flies.

Then Phā′raōh began to yield a little. He said:

"Why must you go out of the land to worship God? Worship him here in this land."

But Mō′şeş said, "When we worship the Lord, we must make an offering: and our offerings are of animals which the people of Ē′ġy̆pt worship, oxen and sheep. It would make the Ê-ġy̆p′tianş angry to see us offering a sacrifice of animals which they call gods."

"Well," said Phā′raōh, "you may go; but do not go far away, and come back." But when Mō′şeş and Aâr′on had taken away the plague, Phā′raōh broke his promise again, and still held the people as slaves.

Then another plague came. A terrible disease struck all the animals in Ē′ġy̆pt, the horses and asses, the camels, the sheep, and the oxen; and they died by the thousand in a day, all over the land. But no plague came upon the flocks and herds of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes.

But Phā′raōh was still stubborn. He would not obey God's voice. Then Mō′şeş and Aâr′on gathered up in their hands ashes from the furnace, and threw it up like a cloud into the air. And instantly boils began to break out on men and on beasts all through the land.

Still Phā′raōh refused to obey; and then Mō′şeş stretched out his rod toward the sky. At once a terrible storm burst forth upon the land; all the more terrible because in that land rain scarcely ever falls. Sometimes there will not be even a shower of rain for years at a time. But now the black clouds rolled, the thunder sounded, the lightning flashed, and the rain poured down, and with the rain came hail, something that the Ḗ-ġy̆p′tianş had never seen before. It struck all the crops growing in the fields, and the fruits on the trees, and destroyed them.

Then again Phā′raōh was frightened, and promised to let the people go; and again when God took away the hail at Mō′şeş' prayer, he broke his word, and would not let the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes leave the land.

Then after the hail came great clouds of locusts, which ate up every green thing that the hail had spared. And after the locusts came the plague of darkness. For three days there was thick darkness, no sun shining, nor moon, nor stars. But still Phā′raōh would not let the people go. Phā′raōh said to Mō′şeş:

"Get out of my sight. Let me never see your face again. If you come into my presence you shall be killed."

And Mō′şeş said, "It shall be as you say, I will see your face no more."

And God said to Mō′şeş, "There shall be one plague more, and then Phā′raōh will be glad to let the people go. He will drive you out of the land. Make your people ready to go out of Ē′ġy̆pt; your time here will soon be ended."

Story Twenty-three

THE NIGHT WHEN A NATION WAS BORN

Exodus xi : 1, to xiii : 22.

WHILE all these terrible plagues, of which we read in the last story, were falling upon the people of Ē′ġy̆pt, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes in the land of Gō′shen were living in safety under God's care. The waters there were not made blood; nor did the flies or the locusts trouble them. While all was dark in the rest of Ē′ġy̆pt, in the land of Gō′shen the sun was shining.

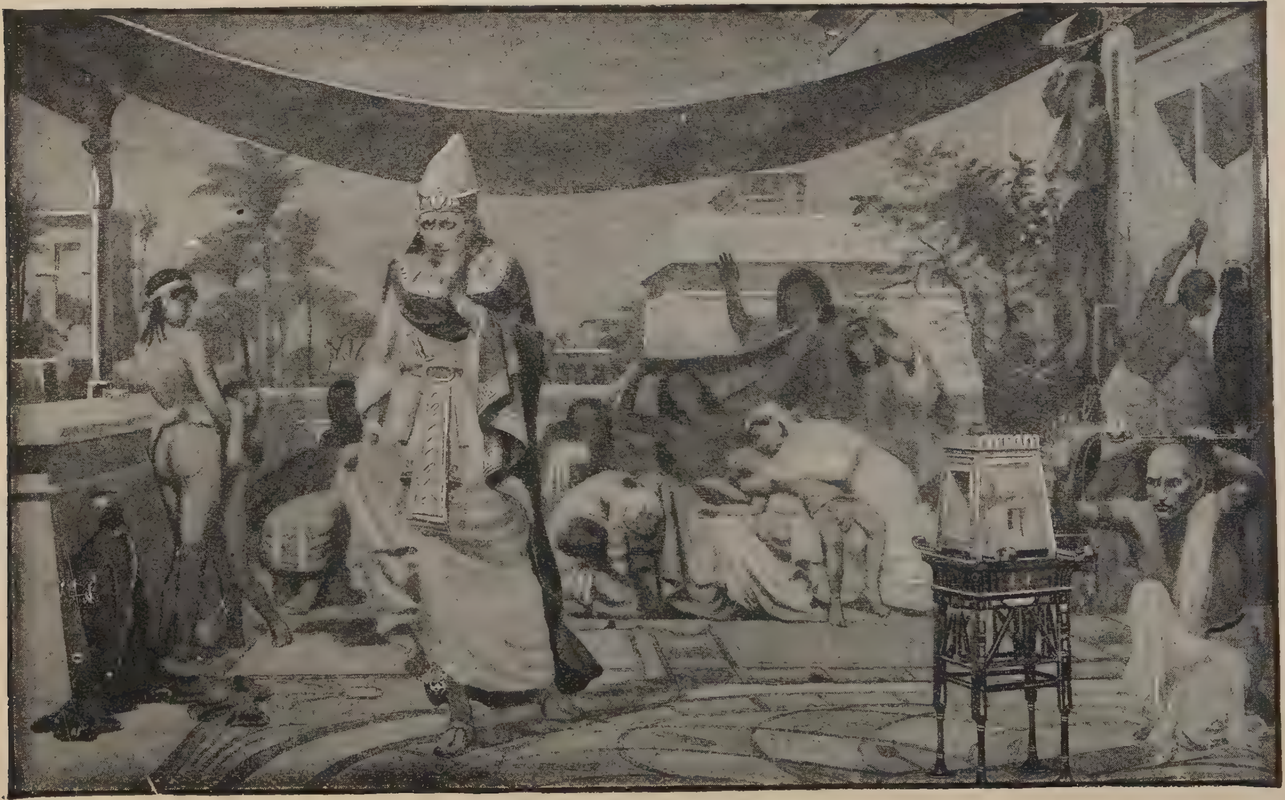
This made the Ê-ġy̆p′tianş feel that the Lord God of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes was watching over his own people. They brought gifts to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, of gold and silver, and jewels, and precious things of every kind, to win their favor, and to win the favor of their God. So the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, from being very poor, began suddenly to be very rich.

Now Mō′şeş said to the people:

"In a few days you are to go out of Ē′ġy̆pt, so gather together, get yourselves in order by your families, and your twelve tribes; and be ready to march out of Ē′ġy̆pt."

And the people of Ĭş′ra-el did as Mō′şeş bade them. Then said Mō′şeş:

"God will bring one plague more upon the Ê-ġy̆p′tianş, and then they will let you go. And you must take care, and obey God's command exactly, or the terrible plague will come upon your houses with the Ê-ġy̆p′tian houses. At midnight, the angel of the Lord will go through the land, and the oldest child in every house shall die. Phā′raōh's son shall die, and every rich man's son, and every poor man's son, even the son of the beggar that has no home. But your families shall be safe if you do exactly as I command you."



PHĀ'RAŌH'S OWN SON LAY DEAD.

Then Mō′şeş told them what to do. Every family was bidden to find a lamb and to kill it. They were to take some of the blood of the lamb and sprinkle it at the entrance of the house, on the door-frame overhead, and on each side. Then they were to roast the lamb, and with it to cook some vegetables, and to eat it standing around the table, with all their garments on, ready to march away as soon as the meal should be ended. And no one was to go out of his house that night, for God's angel would be abroad, and he might be killed if the angel should meet him.

The children of Ĭş′ra-el did as Mō′şeş commanded them. They killed the lamb, and sprinkled the blood, and ate the supper in the night, as God had told them to do. And this supper was called "the Pass-over Supper," because when the angel saw the doors sprinkled with blood, he *passed over* those houses, and did not enter them. And in memory of this great night, when God kept his people from death, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were commanded to eat just such a supper on that same night every year. This became a great feast of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, and was called "The Passover."

Does not that slain lamb, and his blood sprinkled to save the people from death, make you think of Jē′şuş Chrīst, who was the Lamb of God, slain to save us all?

And that night a great cry went up from all the land of Ē′ġy̆pt. In every house there was one, and that one the oldest son, who died. And Phā′raōh the king of Ē′ġy̆pt saw his own son lie dead, and knew that it was the hand of God. And all the people of Ē′ġy̆pt were filled with terror, as they saw their children lying dead in their houses.

The king now sent a messenger to Mō′şeş and Aâr′on, saying:

"Make haste; get out of the land; take everything that you have; leave nothing. And pray to your God to have mercy upon us, and to do us no more harm."

So suddenly at the last, early in the morning, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, after four hundred years in Ē′ġy̆pt, went out of the land. They went out in order, like a great army, family by family, and tribe by tribe. They went out in such haste, that they had no time to bake bread to eat on the journey. They left the dough in the pans, all ready mixed for baking, but not yet risen as bread is before it is baked: and they set the bread-pans on their heads, as people do in that land when they carry loads. And as a memory of that day, when they took the bread without waiting for it to rise, the rule was made that for one week in every year, and that same time in the year when they went out of Ē′ġy̆pt, all the people of Ĭş′ra-el should eat bread that is "unleavened," that is, bread made without yeast, and unrisen. And this rule is kept to this day by the Jews, who belong to the Ĭş′ra-el-īte family.

And the Lord God went before the host of Ĭş′ra-el, as they marched out of Ē′ġy̆pt. In the day time there was a great cloud, like a pillar, in front; and at night it became a pillar of fire. So both by day and night, as they saw the cloudy and fiery pillar going before, they could say, "Our Lord, the God of heaven and earth, goes before us."

When the pillar of cloud stopped, they knew that was a sign that they were to pause in their journey and rest. So they set up their tents, and waited until the cloud should rise up and go forward. When they looked, and saw that the pillar of cloud was higher up in the air, and as though moving forward, they took down their tents, and formed in order for the march. Thus the pillar was like a guide by day and a guard by night.

You remember that when Jō′şeph died (see the end of Story Nineteen), he commanded the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes not to bury his body in Ē′ġy̆pt, but to keep it in a stone coffin, unburied, as long as they should stay in the land. When they were going out of Ē′ġy̆pt, the two tribes of Ē′phră-ĭm and Mȧ-năs′seh, who had sprung from Jō′şeph, his descendants, as they are called,—took with them on their journey this stone coffin which held the body of Jō′şeph their father. And thus the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes went out of Ē′ġy̆pt, four hundred years after they had gone down to Ē′ġy̆pt to live.

Story Twenty-four

HOW THE SEA BECAME DRY LAND, AND THE SKY RAINED BREAD

Exodus xiv : 1, to xvi : 36.

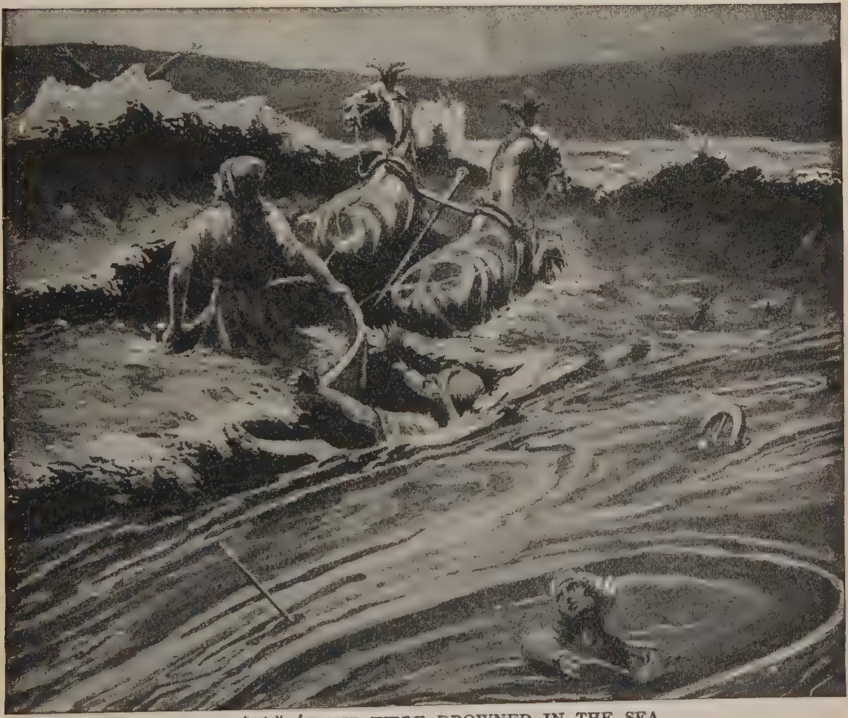
WHEN the children of Ĭş′ra-el came out of Ē′ġȳpt it was their aim to go at once to the land of Cā′năan, from which their fathers had come. The shortest road was that following the shore of the Great Sea, and entering Cā′năan on the southwest. But in this region lived the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş, a strong and warlike people; and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, after ages of slavery, were not fit to carry on war. The other way was by the southeast, through the desert of Mount Sī′nāi, where Mō′şeş knew the land, for it was there that he had been a shepherd for many years.

So the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, led by the pillar of cloud and fire turned to the southeast, directly toward the Red Sea, which rolled between them and the desert. In a very few days they came to the shore of the sea, with the water before them, and high mountains on each side.

As soon as the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had left their homes, and were on the march, King Phā′raōh was sorry that he had let them go; for now they would no more be his servants and do his work. Word came to Phā′raōh that the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were lost among the mountains, and held fast by the sea in front of them. Phā′raōh called out his army, his chariots, and his horsemen, and followed the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, intending either to kill them, or to bring them back. Very soon the army of Ē′ġȳpt was close behind the host of Ĭş′ra-el, and the hearts of the people were filled with fear. They cried to Mō′şeş, saying:

"Why did you bring us out into this terrible place, shut in by the mountains and the sea, and with our enemies close behind us? It would be better to serve the Ē-ġȳp′tianş, than to die here in the wilderness!"

"Fear not," answered Mō′şeş. "Stand still, and see how God will save you. As for the Ē̆′ġy̆p′tianş, whom you now see following you, you will see them no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall stand still and see your enemies slain." That night the pillar of fire, which was before the host of Ĭş′ra-el went behind them, and stood between the camp of the Ē̆-ġy̆p′tianş and the camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. To Ĭş′ra-el it was bright and dazzling with the glory of the Lord, but to the Ē̆-ġy̆p′tianş it was dark and terrible; and they dared not enter it.



THE Ē̆-ĠY̆P′TIANŞ WERE DROWNED IN THE SEA.

And all that night there blew over the sea a mighty east wind, so that the water was blown away, and when the morning came there was a ridge of dry land between water on one side and water on the other, making a road across the sea to the land beyond, and on each side of the road the water lay in great lakes, as if to keep their enemies away from them.

Then Mō′şeş told the people to go forward, and the pillar of cloud again went before them; and the people followed, a great army. They walked across the Red Sea as on dry land, and passed safely over into the wilderness on the other side. So God brought his people out of Ē′ġȳpt, into a land that they had never seen.

When the Ē-ġȳp′tianş saw them marching into the sea, they followed, with their chariots and their horses. But the sand was no longer hard; it had become soft, and their chariot-wheels were fastened in it, and many of them broke off from the chariots. And the horses became mired, and fell down, so that the army was in confusion; and all were frightened. The soldiers cried out:

"Let us fly from the face of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes! The Lord is fighting for them, and against us!"

By this time, all the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had passed through the Red Sea, and were standing on the high ground beyond it, looking at their enemies slowly struggling through the sand, all in one heaped up mass of men, and horses, and chariots. Then Mō′şeş lifted up his hand, and at once a great tide of water swept up from the sea on the south; the road over which the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had walked in safety was covered with water; and the host of Phā′raōh, with all his chariots and his horses and their riders were drowned in the sea, before the eyes of the people of Ĭş′ra-el. They saw the dead bodies of the Ē-ġȳp′tianş tossed up by the waves on the shore.

Mō′şeş wrote a great song, and all the people sang it together, over their great victory, which God had wrought for them. It began thus:

"I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea,
The Lord is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation."*

And now the people of Ĭş′ra-el were no longer in a level land. with fields of grain, and abundance of food, and streams of water, They were in the great desert, with a rocky path under them, and mountains of rock rising all around, with only a few springs of water, and these far apart. Such a host of men, and women and children, with their flocks, would need much water, and they found very little.

---

* See Exodus xv for the words of this song.

They saw in the distance some springs of water, and ran to drink of it, for they were very thirsty. But when they tasted, they found it bitter, so that they could not drink it. Then the people cried to Mō′şeş, and Mō′şeş cried to the Lord; and the Lord showed Mō′şeş a tree, and told him to cut it down and throw it into the water. Mō′şeş did so, and then the water became fresh, and pure, and good, so that the people could drink it. This place they named Mā′rah, a word which means "bitterness," because of the water which they found there.

After passing Mā′rah, they came to another and more pleasant place, where they saw twelve springs of fresh water, and a grove of seventy palm-trees around them. And there they rested under the cool shade.

But soon they were in a hot desert of sand, which lies between the waters of Ē′lim and Mount Sī′nāi; and again they were in great trouble, for there was no food for such an army of people.

Then Mō′şeş called upon God, and the Lord said, "I will rain bread from heaven upon you; and you shall go out and gather it every day."

The next morning when the people looked out of their tents, they saw all around the camp, on the sand, little white flakes, like snow or frost. They had never seen anything like it before, and they said, just as anybody would say, "What is it?" In the language of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, the Hē′brew language, "What is it?" is the word "Manhu." So the people said to one another "Manhu? Manhu?" And this gave a name afterward to what they saw, the name *Manna*.

And Mō′şeş said to them, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat. Go out and gather it, as much as you need. But take only as much as you need for to-day, for it will not keep; and God will give you more to-morrow."

So the people went out, and gathered the manna. They cooked it in various ways, baking it and boiling it; and the taste of it was like wafers flavored with honey. Some took more than they needed, not trusting God's word that there would be more on the next day. But that which was left over, after it was gathered, spoiled, and smelled bad, so that it was useless. This was to teach the people that each day they should trust God for their daily bread.

But the manna which was left on the ground did not spoil. When the sun came up, it melted away, just like frost or snow flakes. Before the sixth day of the week came, Mō′şeş said to the people:

"To-morrow, on the sixth day of the week, take twice as much manna as usual; for the next day is the Lord's Sabbath, the day of rest, and the manna will not come on that day."

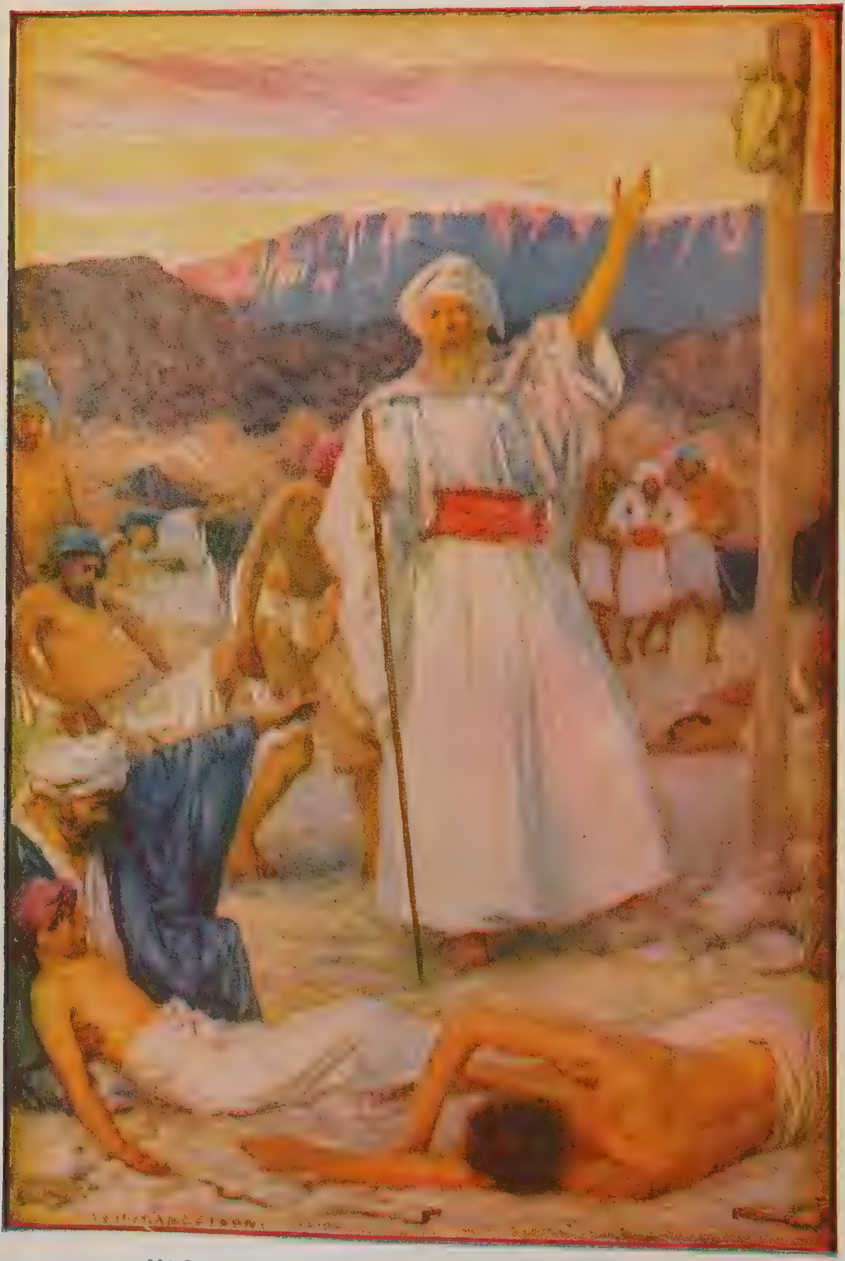
So the next morning, all the people went out as before to gather the manna. On that day, they found that the manna which was not used did not spoil, but kept fresh until the next morning.

On the Sabbath-day, some of the people who had failed to hear Mō′şeş, and had not gathered the manna in advance for the Sabbath, went out, and they could find none. So that day, these people had nothing to eat; and all Ĭş′ra-ĕl learned the lesson, which we also should remember, that one day in each week belongs to God, and is to be kept holy to the Lord.

All the time that the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes lived in the wilderness, which was forty years, they ate the manna which God gave them day by day. Not until they entered the land of Cā′năan, did the manna cease to fall.

Do you remember who it was, long after this, that said "I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst"?*

* See John vi : 35.



MOSES POINTING TO THE SERPENT OF BRASS

Story Twenty-five

THE MOUNTAIN THAT SMOKED AND THE WORDS THAT WERE SPOKEN FROM IT

Exodus xvii : 1, to xxxi : 18.

WHILE the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were journeying through the desert they had great trouble from want of water. Between the wells of Ē′lim and Mount Sī′nāi, they found no streams nor springs. Their sheep and men suffered from thirst, and the little children were crying for water. The people came to Mō′şeş, and said in great anger:

"Give us water, or we shall die. Why have you brought us up from Ē′ġy̆pt to kill us here in the desert?"

And Mō′şeş called on God, and said:

"Lord, what shall I do to this people? They are almost ready to stone me in their anger. How can I give them water?"

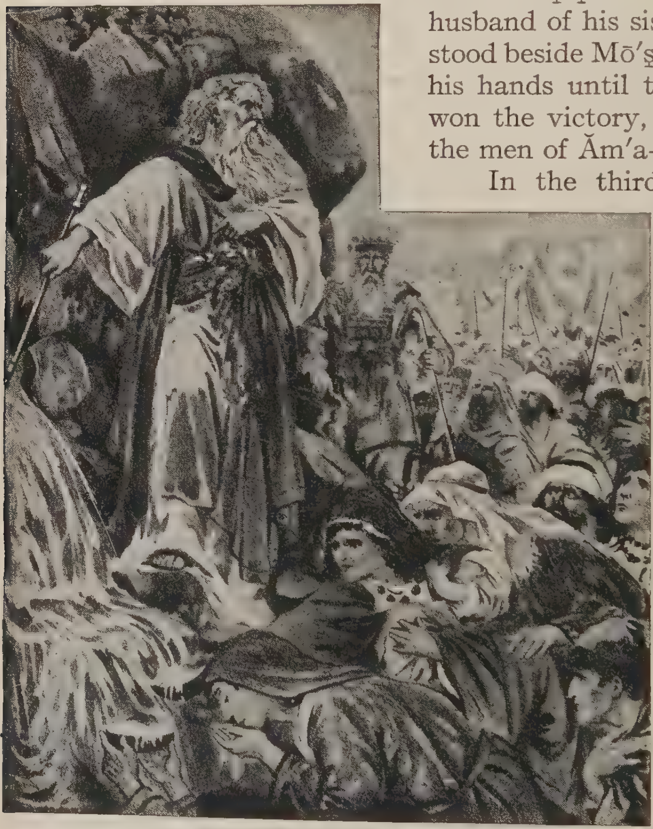
Then God told Mō′şeş what to do; and this was what Mō′şeş did:

He brought the people together before a great rock, and with his rod he struck the rock. Then out of the rock came forth a stream of water, which ran like a little river through the camp, and gave them plenty of water for themselves and for their flocks.

While they were in camp around this rock at Rĕph′i-dĭm the wild people who had their homes in the desert, and were called the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes, made sudden war on the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. They came down upon them from the mountains, while they were weary with marching, and killed some of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Then Mō′şeş called out those of the people who were fit for war, and made a young man named Jŏsh′u-ȧ their leader; and they fought a battle with the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes.

While they were fighting, Mō′şeş stood on a rock, where all could see him, and prayed the Lord God to help his people. His hands were stretched out toward heaven; and while Mō′şeş′ hands were reaching upward the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were strong, and drove back the enemy. But when Mō′şeş’ arms fell down, then the enemy drove back the men of Ĭş′ra-el.

So Aâr′on, Mō′şeş’ brother, and Hûr (who is thought to have been Mō′şeş’ brother-in-law, the husband of his sister Mĭr′ĭ-am), stood beside Mō′şeş, and held up his hands until the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes won the victory, and overcame the men of Ăm′a-lĕk.



MŌ′ŞEŞ STRIKES THE ROCK.

In the third month after the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had left the land of Ē′ġy̆pt they came to a great mountain which rises straight up from the plain, so straight that one can walk up to it and touch it with his hand. This was Mount Sī′nāi; and it was one of a group of mountains called Hō′reb, where Mō′şeş saw the burning bush, and heard God’s voice, as we read in an earlier Story.

The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes made their camp in front of Mount Sī′nāi, and stayed there for many days. And God said to Mō′şeş:

“Let none of the people go up on the mount, or come near to touch it. If even one of your cattle or sheep shall touch the mountain it must be killed. This is a holy place, where God will show his glory."

And a few days after this, the people heard the voice as of many trumpets sounding on the top of the mountain. They looked, and saw that the mountain was covered with clouds and smoke, and lightnings were flashing from it, while the thunder rolled and crashed. And the mountain shook and trembled, as though an earthquake were tearing it in pieces.

The people were filled with alarm. They came out of their tents, and ran back from the foot of the mountain, and stood far off, trembling with fear. Then God spoke in the hearing of all the people, as with a voice of thunder, and said:

"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Ē′ġȳpt, out of the house of bondage."

And then God spoke to all the people the words of the Ten Commandments, to which you have listened many times. The words are these:

I.

Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

II.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

III.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV.

Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all

that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

V.

Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI.

Thou shalt not kill.

VII.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII.

Thou shalt not steal.

IX.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

And all the people heard these words spoken by the Lord God; and they saw the mountain smoking, and the lightning flashing, and they were frightened. They said to Mō′şeş:

"Let not God speak to us any more; for the sound of his voice will take away our lives. Let God speak to you, Mō′şeş, and do you speak to us God's words."

"Fear not," said Mō′şeş, "for God has come to you, to speak with you, that you may fear him, and do his will."

And Mō′şeş drew near to the mountain, where the clouds and darkness and lightnings were. Then God called Mō′şeş up to the top of the mount; and Mō′şeş went up, and with him was his helper, the young man Jŏsh′u-ȧ. Jŏsh′u-ȧ stayed on the side of the mountain, but Mō′şeş went up alone to the top, among the clouds.

And there Mō′şeş stayed upon the mountain, alone with God, for forty days, talking with God, and listening to the words which God spoke to him, the laws for the people of Ĭş′ra-el to obey. And God gave to Mō′şeş two flat tablets of stone, upon which God had written with his own hand the Ten Commandments.

Story Twenty-six

HOW AARON MADE A GOLDEN CALF, AND WHAT BECAME OF IT

Exodus xxxii : 1, to xxxiv : 35.

WHILE Mō′şeş was in the mountain alone with God, a strange and wicked thing was done in the camp on the plain. At first the people were alarmed when they saw the mountain smoking, and heard the thunder. But soon they grew accustomed to it, and when day after day passed, and Mō′şeş did not come down, at last they said to Aâr′on:

"Come now, make us a god that we may worship, and that we may have to lead us. As for Mō′şeş, the man who brought us out of the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, we do not know what has become of him."

Aâr′on was not a man of strong will, as Mō′şeş was. When his brother Mō′şeş was not by his side Aâr′on was weak, and ready to yield to the wishes of the people. Aâr′on said:

"If you must have a god that you can look at, then break off the gold earrings that are in your ears, and in the ears of your wives and children, and bring them to me."

Then the people brought their gold to Aâr′on; and Aâr′on melted the gold rings into one mass, and shaped it with a graving tool into the form of a calf, and this he brought out and stood up before the people. Then they all cried out:

"This is your god, O Ĭş′ra-el, that brought you out of the land of Ē′ġy̆pt."

And Aâr′on built an altar before the image, and he said to all the people, "To-morrow shall be a feast to the Lord."

Perhaps Aâr′on thought that if the people could have before them an image that they could see, they might still be kept to the worship of the Lord God. But in this he was greatly mistaken.

The people came to the feast, and offered sacrifices; and then they began to dance around the altar, and to do wicked deeds together, as they had seen the people of Ē′ġy̆pt doing before their idols. And all this time the mountain was smoking and flashing with fire, almost over their heads!

And the Lord, up in the mountain, spoke to Mō′şeş, and said:

"Hasten, and get down to the camp; for your people have done very wickedly. They have made for themselves an idol, and they are worshipping it now. I am angry with them, and am ready to destroy them all, and to make of your children a great nation."

And Mō′şeş pleaded with the Lord for Ĭş′ra-el, and God did not destroy the people; but he sent Mō′şeş down to them, holding in his hands the two stone tables on which God had written the Ten Commandments. As he went down the mountain Jŏsh′u-ȧ joined him, and said to him:

"I can hear noise of war in the camp. It is not the sound of men who are shouting for victory, nor is it the cry of those who are beaten in battle; it is the voice of singing that I hear."

And in a moment more, as they stood where they could look down upon the camp, there was standing the golden calf, and around it were the people making offerings, and feasting, and dancing and singing.

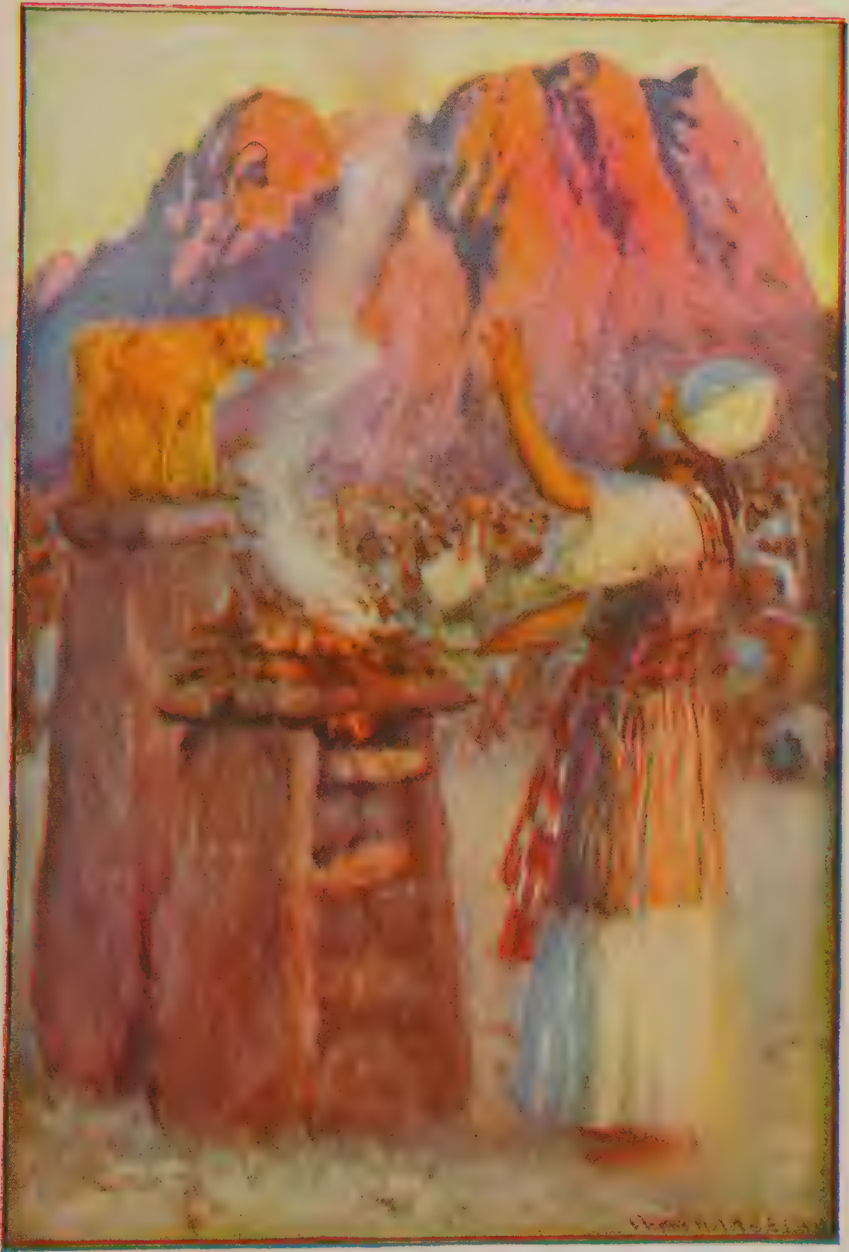
And Mō′şeş was so angry when he saw all the wickedness and shame of his people, that he threw down the two tables out of his hands, and broke them in pieces upon the rocks. What was the use of keeping the tables of stone, he may have thought, while the people were breaking the laws written upon them?

Mō′şeş came straight into the midst of the throng, and at once all the dancing and merry-making stopped. He tore down the golden calf, and broke it in pieces, and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and threw it into the water; and he made the people drink the water filled with its dust. He meant to teach the people that they would suffer punishment like bitter water, for their wicked deed.

Then Mō′şeş turned to Aär′on:

"What led you to such an act as this?" said Mō′şeş. "Why did you let the people persuade you to make them an image for worship?"

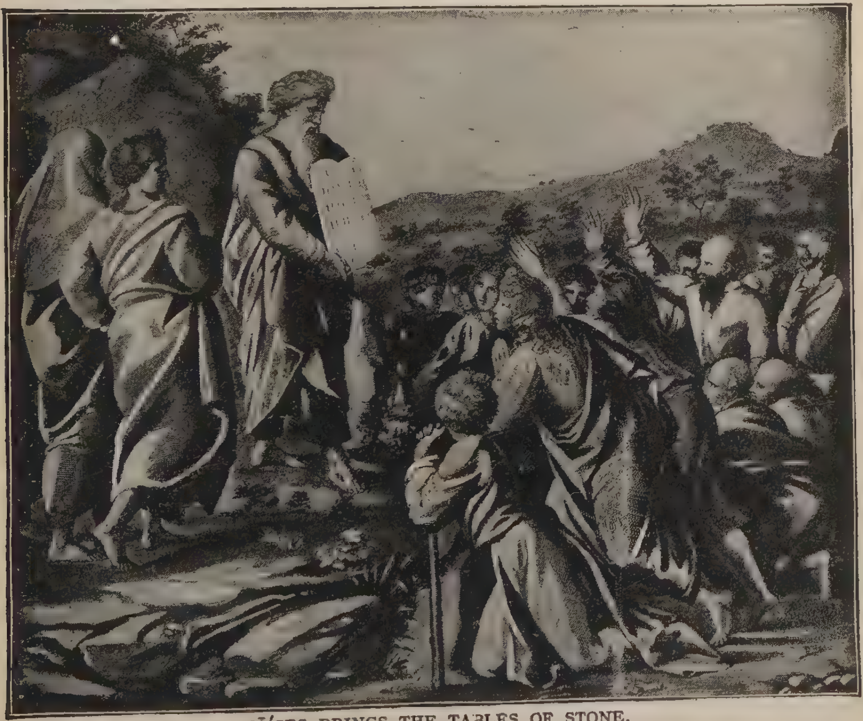
STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL BOWING BEFORE THE GOLDEN CALF

And Aâr′on said, "Do not be angry with me; you know how the hearts of this people are set to do evil. They came to me and said, 'make us a god,' and I said to them, 'give me whatever gold you have.' So they gave it to me, and I threw the gold into the fire, and this calf came out!"

Then Mō′şeş stood at the entrance to the camp, and called out: "Whoever is on the Lord's side, let him come and stand by me!" Then one whole tribe out of the twelve tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, the tribe of Lē′vī, all sprung from Lē′vī, one of Jā′cob's sons, came and stood beside Mō′şeş. And Mō′şeş said to them:



MŌ′ŞEŞ BRINGS THE TABLES OF STONE.

"Draw your swords, and go through the camp, and kill every one whom you find bowing down to the idol. Spare no one. Slay your friends and your neighbors, if they are worshipping the image."

And on that day three thousand of the worshippers of the idol were slain by the sons of Lē′vī.

Then Mō′şeş said to the people, "You have sinned a great sin; but I will go to the Lord, and I will make an offering to him, and will ask him to forgive your sin."

And Mō′şeş went before the Lord, and prayed for the people, and said:

"Oh Lord, this people have sinned a great sin. Yet, now, forgive their sin, if thou art willing. And if thou wilt not forgive their sin, then let me suffer with them, for they are my people."

And the Lord forgave the sin of the people, and took them once again for his own, and promised to go with them, and to lead them into the land which he had promised to their fathers.

And God said to Mō′şeş, "Cut out two tables of stone, like those which I gave to you, and which you broke; and bring them up to me in the mountain, and I will write on them again the words of the law."

So Mō′şeş went up a second time into the holy mount; and there God talked with him again. Mō′şeş stayed forty days on this second meeting with God, as he had stayed in the mountain forty days before. And all this time, while God was talking with Mō′şeş, the people waited in the camp; and they did not again set up any idol for worship.

Once more Mō′şeş came down the mountain, bringing the two stone tables, upon which God had written the words of his law, the Ten Commandments. And Mō′şeş had been so close to God's glory, and had been so long in the blaze of God's light, that when he came into the camp of Ĭş′ra-el, his face was shining, though he did not know it. The people could not look on Mō′şeş' face, it was so dazzling. And Mō′şeş found that when he talked with the people, it was needful for him to wear a vail over his face. When Mō′şeş went to talk with God, he took off the vail; but while he spoke with the people he kept his face covered, for it shone as the sun.

Story Twenty-seven

THE TENT WHERE GOD LIVED AMONG HIS PEOPLE

Exodus xxxv : 1, to xl : 38.

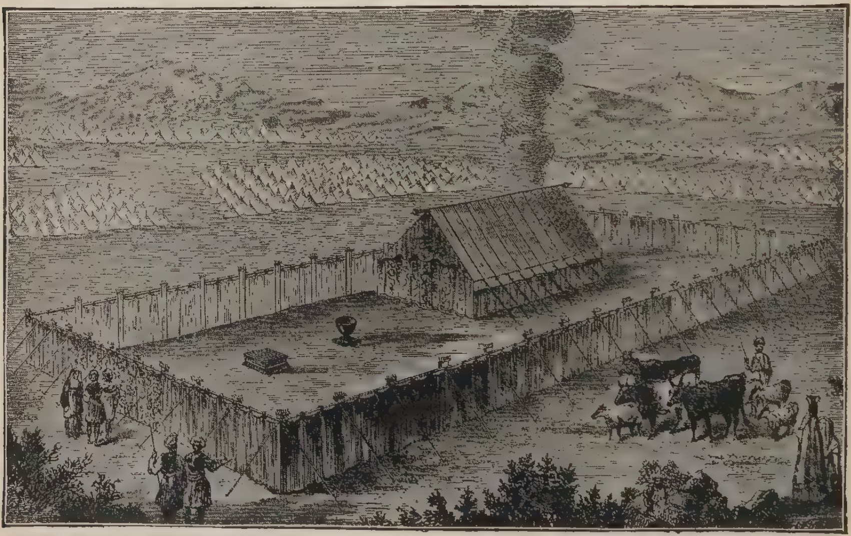
IT may seem strange that the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, after all that God had done for them, and while Mount Sī′nāi was still showing God's glory, should fall away from the service of God to the worship of idols, as we read in the last Story. But you must keep in mind that all the people whom the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had ever met, both in Cā′năan and in Ē′ġy̆pt, were worshippers of images; and from their neighbors the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes also had learned to bow down to idols. In those times everywhere people felt that they must have a god that they could see.

God was very good to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes after they had forsaken him, to take them again as his own people; and God gave to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes a plan for worship, which would allow them to have something that they could see, to remind them of their God; and yet, at the same time, would not lead them to the worship of an image, but would teach them a higher truth, that the true God cannot be seen by the eyes of men.

The plan was this: to have in the middle of the camp of Ĭş′ra-el a house to be called, "The House of God," which the people could see, and to which they could come for worship. Every time that an Ĭş′ra-el-īte looked at this house he might say to himself, and might teach his children, "That is the house where God lives among his people," even though no image stood in the house.

And as the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were living in tents, and were often moving from place to place, this House of God, would need to be something like a tent, so that it could be taken down, and moved, as often as the camp was changed. Such a tent as this was called a Tabernacle. The Tabernacle then was the tent where God was supposed to live among his people, and where the people could meet God. We do not know just how the tent looked, but from the description given of it many have tried to draw it. We give you one picture drawn in this way.

We know that God is a Spirit, and has no body like ours; and that he is everywhere. Yet it was right to say that God lived in the Tabernacle of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, because there God showed his presence in a special way, by having the pillar of cloud over it all day, and the pillar of fire all night. And it was believed by the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes that in one room of this Tabernacle the glory and brightness of God's presence might be seen.



THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS.

This Tabernacle stood exactly in the middle of the camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes in the wilderness. In front of it, and a little distance from it, on the east, stood the tent where Mō′şeş lived, and from which he gave the laws and commands of God to the people.

Around the Tabernacle there was what we might call an open square, though it was not exactly square, for it was about a hundred and fifty feet long by seventy-five feet wide; that is, its length was twice its width. Around it was a curtain of fine linen, in bright colors, hanging upon posts of brass. The posts were held in place by cords fastened to the ground with tent-pins or spikes. Some think that these posts were not of brass, but of copper; for we are not sure that men knew how to make brass in those times. This open square was called the Court of the Tabernacle. The curtain around it was between seven and eight feet high, a little higher than a man's head. In the middle, on the end toward the east, it could be opened for the priests to enter into the court; but no others except the priests and their helpers were ever allowed to enter it.

Inside this court, near the entrance, stood the great Altar. You remember that an altar was made generally of stone, or by heaping up the earth; and that it was the place on which a fire was kindled to burn the offering or sacrifice. The offering or sacrifice, you remember, was the gift offered to God whenever a man worshipped; and it was given to God by being burned upon his altar.

But as a stone-altar or an earth-altar could not be carried from place to place, God told the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to make an altar of wood and brass, or copper. It was like a box, without bottom or top, made of thin boards so that it would not be too heavy, and then covered on the inside and the outside with plates of brass or copper, so that it would not take fire and burn. Inside, a few inches below the top, was a metal grating on which the fire was built; and the ashes would fall through the grating to the ground inside.

This altar had four rings on the corners, through which long poles were placed, so that the priests could carry it on their shoulders when the camp was moved. The altar was a little less than five feet high, and a little more than seven feet wide on each side. This was the great altar, sometimes called "The Altar of Burnt-Offering," because a sacrifice was burned upon it every morning and every evening. Near the altar in the court of the Tabernacle, stood the Laver. This was a large tank or basin, holding water which was used in washing the offerings. For the worship of the Tabernacle much water was needed; and for this purpose the Laver was kept full of water.

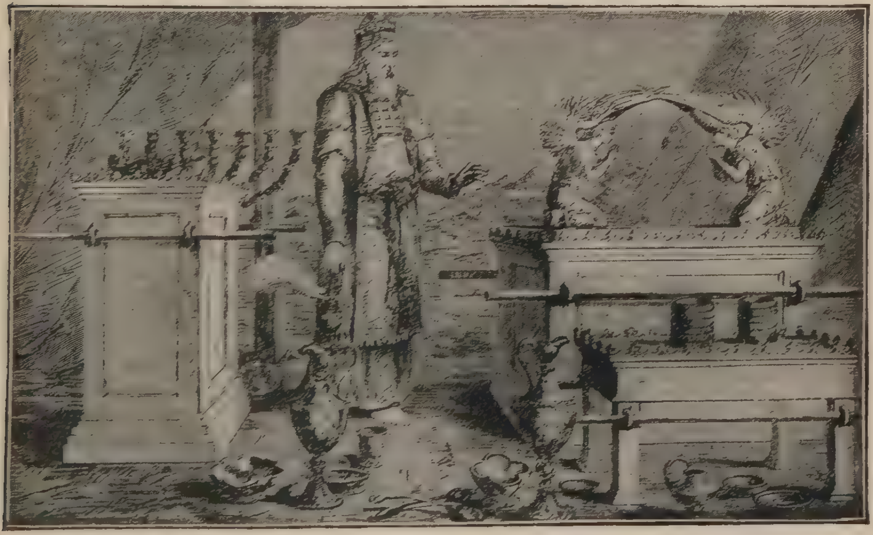
The Tabernacle itself stood in the court. It was a large tent, not unlike the tents in which the people lived while they were journeying through the wilderness, though larger. Its walls, however, were not made of skins or woven cloth, as were most tents, but of boards standing upright on silver bases, and fastened together. The boards were covered with gold. The roof of the Tabernacle was made of four curtains, one laid above another; the inner curtain being beautifully decorated, and the outer curtain of rams' skins to keep out the rain. The board-walls of the Tabernacle were on the two sides and the rear end; the front was open, except when a curtain was hung over it. The Tabernacle, half tent and half house, was about forty-five feet long, and fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. Its only floor was the sand of the desert.

This Tabernacle was divided into two rooms, by a vail which hung down from the roof. The larger room, the one on the eastern end, into which the priest came first from the court, was twice as large as the other room. It was thirty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high, and was called the Holy Place. In the Holy Place were three things: on the right side, as one entered, a table covered with gold, on which lay twelve loaves of bread, as if each tribe gave its offering of food to the Lord; on the left side, the Golden Lampstand, with seven branches, each having its light. This is sometimes called the Golden Candlestick, but as it held lamps, and not candles, it should be called "the lampstand."

At the further end of the Holy Place, close to the vail, was the Golden Altar of Incense: a small altar on which fragrant gum was burned, and from which a silvery cloud floated up. The fire on this altar was always to be lighted from the great altar of brass or copper that was standing outside the Tabernacle in the court. Everything in this room was made of gold, or covered with gold, even to the walls on each side.

The inner room of the Tabernacle was called the Holy of Holies; and it was so sacred that no one except the high-priest ever entered it, and he on only one day in each year. It was fifteen feet wide, fifteen feet long, and fifteen feet high. All that it held was a box or chest, made of wood and covered with plates of gold on both the outside and the inside; and with a cover of solid gold, on which stood two strange figures called cherubim, also made of gold. This chest was called the Ark of the Covenant, and in it were placed for safe-keeping the two stone tables on which God wrote the Ten Commandments. It was in this room, the Holy of Holies, that God was supposed to dwell, and to show his glory. But in it there was no image, to tempt the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to the worship of idols.

Whenever the camp in the desert was to be changed, the priests first carefully covered with curtains all the furniture in the Tabernacle,—the Table, the Lampstand, the Altar of Incense, and the Ark of the Covenant; and they passed rods through the rings which were on the corners of all these articles. They took down the Tabernacle and tied its gold-covered boards and its great curtains, its posts and its pillars, in packages to be carried. And then the men of the tribe of Lē′vī, who were the helpers of the priests, took up their burdens and carried them out in front of the camp. The twelve tribes were arranged in marching order behind them; the Ark of the Covenant unseen under its wrappings, upon the shoulders of the priests, led the way, with the pillar of cloud over it. And thus the children of Ĭş′ra-el removed their camp from place to place for forty years in the wilderness.


THE HIGH PRIEST, THE TABLE FOR BREAD AND THE HOLY ARK.

When they fixed their camping-place after each journey, the Tabernacle was first set up, with the court around it, and the altar in front of it. Then the tribes placed their tents in order around it, three tribes on each of its four sides.

And whenever an Ĭş′ra-el-īte saw the altar with the smoke rising from it, and the Tabernacle with the silver-white cloud above it, he said to himself, "Our God, the Lord of all the earth, lives in that tent. I need no image, made by men's hands, to remind me of God."

Story Twenty-eight

HOW THEY WORSHIPPED GOD IN THE TABERNACLE

Leviticus i : 1 to 13; viii : 1 to 13; Exodus xxvii : 20, 21.

NOW we will tell about some of the services that were held at the Tabernacle, the tent where God lived among his people.

Every morning at sunrise the priests came to the great altar that was before the Tabernacle, and raked the fire, and placed fresh wood upon it, so that it would burn brightly. This fire was never allowed to go out. God had kindled it himself; and the priests watched it closely, and kept wood at hand, so that it was always burning.

Even while the altar was being carried from one place to another, the embers and live coals of the fire were kept in a covered pan, and were taken to the new place for the altar without being allowed to die out; and from the embers of the old fire a new fire was made on the altar.

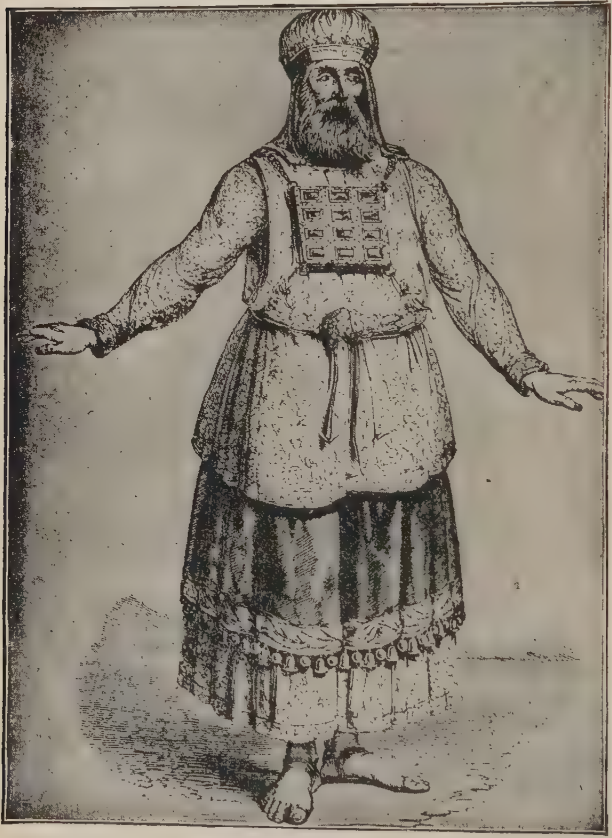
From this altar outside the Tabernacle the priest took every morning and every afternoon a fire-shovel full of burning coals, and placed them in a bowl hanging on chains, so that, with the fire in it, the bowl could be carried by hand. This bowl with the chains was called "a censer." Upon these burning coals the priest placed some fragrant gum called incense, which when laid on the live coals made a bright silvery cloud and sent forth a strong, pleasant odor. The incense in the censer the priest carried into the Holy Place, and there laid it on the Golden Altar of Incense, which stood next to the vail. This was to teach the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes that, like the cloud of incense, their prayers should go up to God.

About nine o'clock in the morning the priest brought a young ox or lamb, and killed it, and caught its blood in a basin. Then he laid the ox or the lamb on the wood which was burning on the altar in front of the Tabernacle, and on the fire he poured also the blood of the slain beast; and then he stood by while the blood and the animal were burned to ashes.

This was the offering, or sacrifice, for all the people of Ĭş′ra-el together, and it was offered every morning and every afternoon. It meant that as the lamb, or the ox, gave up his life, so all the people were to give themselves to God, to be his, and only his. And it meant also, that as they gave themselves to God, God would forgive and take away their sins.

There was another meaning in all this service. It was to point to the time when, just as the lamb died as an offering for the people, Jē′şus, the Son of God, should give his life on the cross, the Lamb of God, dying to take away the sins of the world. But this meaning, of course, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes of that time could not understand, because they lived before Chrīst came.

Sometimes a man came to the priest with a lamb or an ox as an offering for himself. It must always be a perfect animal, and the best, without any defects, for God will only take from man his best. The man who wished to worship God led his lamb to the entrance of the court, by the altar; and laid his hands upon its head, as if to say, "This animal stands in my place; and when I give it to God, I give myself." Then the priest killed it, and laid it on the burning wood on the altar, and poured the animal's blood upon it. And the man stood at the entrance of the court of the Tabernacle, and watched it burn away, and offered with it his thanks to God and his prayer for the forgiveness of his sins. And God heard and answered the prayer of the man who worshipped him with the offering at his altar.



THE HIGH-PRIEST.

Every day the priest went into the Holy Place and filled the seven lamps on the Lampstand with fresh oil. These lamps were never allowed to go out; that is, some of them must always be kept burning. While the lamps on one side were put out, in order to be refilled, those on the other side were kept burning until these had been filled and lighted once more. So the lamps in the house of God never went out. Does not this make you think of One who long after this said, "I am the light of the world"?*

On the gold-covered table in the Holy Place were always standing twelve loaves of unleavened bread; that is, bread made without any yeast. One loaf stood for each tribe of Ĭş'ra-el. On every Sabbath morning the priests came in with twelve fresh loaves, which they sprinkled with incense, and laid on the table in place of the stale loaves. Then, standing around the table, they ate the twelve old loaves. Thus the bread on the table before the Lord was kept fresh at all times.

---

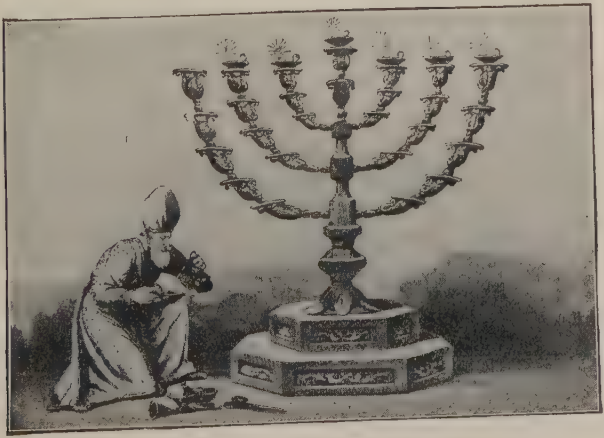
* See John viii : 12.

God choose Aâr′on and his sons to be the priests for all Ĭş′ra-el; and their *children, and the descendants who should come after them were to be priests as long as the worship of the Tabernacle, and of the Temple that followed it, should be continued. Aâr′on, as the high-priest, wore a splendid robe; and a breast-plate of precious stones was over his bosom; and a peculiar hat, called "a miter," was on his head. It may seem strange to us, that when Aâr′on and his sons were in the Tabernacle they wore no shoes or stockings, but stood barefooted. This was because it was a holy place, and as we have seen, in those lands people take off their shoes, as we take off our hats, when they enter places sacred to God and his worship.

Aâr′on and his sons, as Mō′şeş also, belonged to the tribe of Lē′vī, the one among the tribes which stood faithful to God when the other tribes bowed down to the golden calf. This tribe was chosen to help the priests in the services of the Tabernacle; though only Aâr′on and his sons could enter the Holy Place; and only the high-priest could go into the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was; and he could enter on but one day in each year.

---

* See John vi : 35.



THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

Story Twenty-nine

WHAT STRONG DRINK BROUGHT TO AARON'S SONS

Leviticus x : 1 to 11.

SOON after the Tabernacle was set up in the middle of the camp of Ĭş′ra-el, and the priests began the daily service of worship, a sad event took place, which gave great sorrow to Aâr′on the priest, to his family, and to all the people. The two older sons of Aâr′on, whose names were Nā′dăb and Ā-bī′hū, were one day in the Holy Place. It was a part of their work to take in a censer some burning coals from the great altar of burnt-offering in front of the Tabernacle, and with these coals to light the fire in the small golden altar of incense, which stood inside the Holy Place, near the vail.

These young men had been drinking wine, and their heads were not clear. They did not think of what they were doing; and instead of taking the fire from the altar of burnt-offering, they took some other fire, and with this they went into the Holy Place to burn the incense upon the golden altar. God was angry with these young men for coming into his holy house in a drunken state, and for doing what he had forbidden them to do; for no fire except that from the great altar was allowed in the Holy Place.

While they were standing by the golden altar, fire came out from it, and they both fell down dead in the Holy Place. And when Mō′şeş heard of it, he said: "This is the sign that God's house is holy, and that God's worship is holy; and God will make people to fear him, because he is holy." And Mō′şeş would not allow Aâr′on, the father of these two men, to touch their dead bodies. He said, "You have on the robes of the high-priest, and you are leading in the service of worship. God's work must go on, and must not stop for your trouble, great as it is."

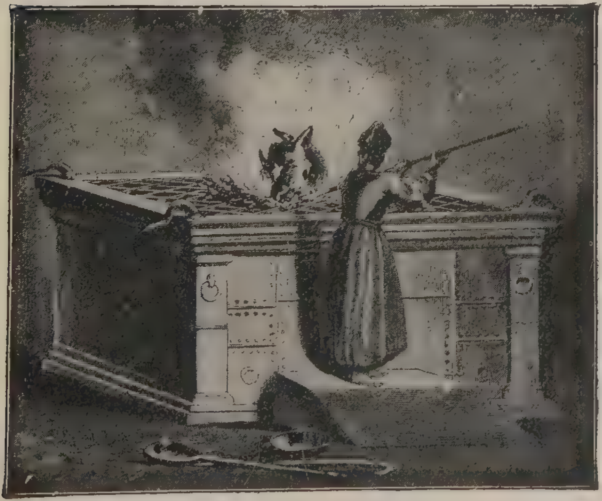
Then Aâr′on stood by the altar, and offered the sacrifice, though his heart was very sad. And the cousins of Aâr′on, by the command of Mō′şeş, went into the Holy Place and carried out the dead bodies of the two young men, dressed as they were in their priests' robes. And they buried these men outside the camp, in the desert.

And Mō′şeş said:

"After this, let no priest drink wine or strong drink before he enters the Tabernacle. Be sober, when you are leading the worship of the people, so that you will know the difference between the things that are holy and those that are common; and so that you may teach the people all the laws which the Lord has given them."

The rule that Mō′şeş gave to the priests to be kept when they were leading the worship of the people, not to drink wine or strong drink, is a good rule for every one to keep, not only when worshipping God, but at all times.

Besides these two sons of Aâr′on who had died, there were two other sons, named Ē-le-ā′zar and Ĭth′a-mär. These young men took their older brothers' places in the services of the Tabernacle; and they were very careful to do exactly as the Lord had bidden them.



THE BRAZEN ALTAR.

Story Thirty

THE SCAPEGOAT IN THE WILDERNESS

Leviticus xvi : 1 to 34.

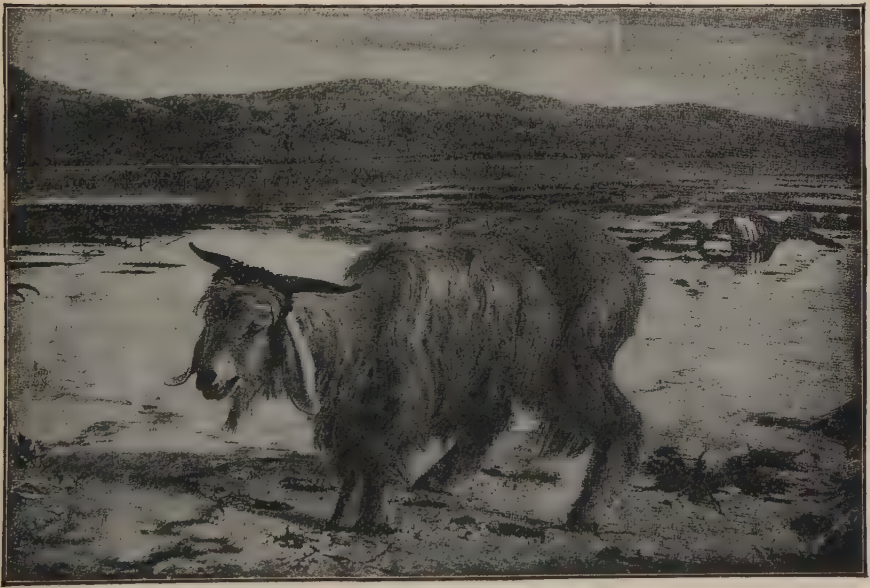
YOU have read that only the high-priest could enter the inner room of the Tabernacle, called the Holy of Holies, where was the ark of the covenant, and where God was supposed to live. And even the high-priest could go into this room on but one day in the year. This day was called "the Great Day of Atonement."

The service on that day was to show the people that all are sinners, and that they must seek from God to have their sins taken away. God teaches us these things by word in his book, the Bible; but in those times there was no Bible, and very few could have read a written book; so God taught the people then by acts which they could see.

As a beginning of the service on the day of atonement, everybody was required to fast from sunset on the day before until three o'clock on that afternoon, the hour when the offering was placed on the altar. No person could eat anything in all that time. Even children, except nursing babies, were not allowed to have any food. They were to show a sorrow for sin, and were to appear before God as seeking for mercy.

Early in the morning of that day the high-priest offered on the altar before the Tabernacle what was called "a sin-offering," for himself and his family. It was a young ox, burned upon the altar. He took some of the blood of this ox, and carried it through the Holy Place, lifted the vail, entered into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled the blood on the golden lid to the ark of the covenant before the Lord. This was to show the priest himself as a sinner, seeking mercy and forgiveness from God. The priest must himself have his own sins forgiven, before asking forgiveness for others.

Then the priest came again to the great altar before the Tabernacle. Here two goats were brought to him. Lots were cast upon them and on the forehead of one goat was written, "For the Lord," and on the other words that meant, "To be sent away." These two goats were looked upon as bearing the sins of the people. One was killed, and burned on the altar; and the priest, with some of the blood of the slain goat, again entered the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled the blood on the ark of the covenant, as before, thus asking God to receive the blood and the offering, and to forgive the sins of the people.

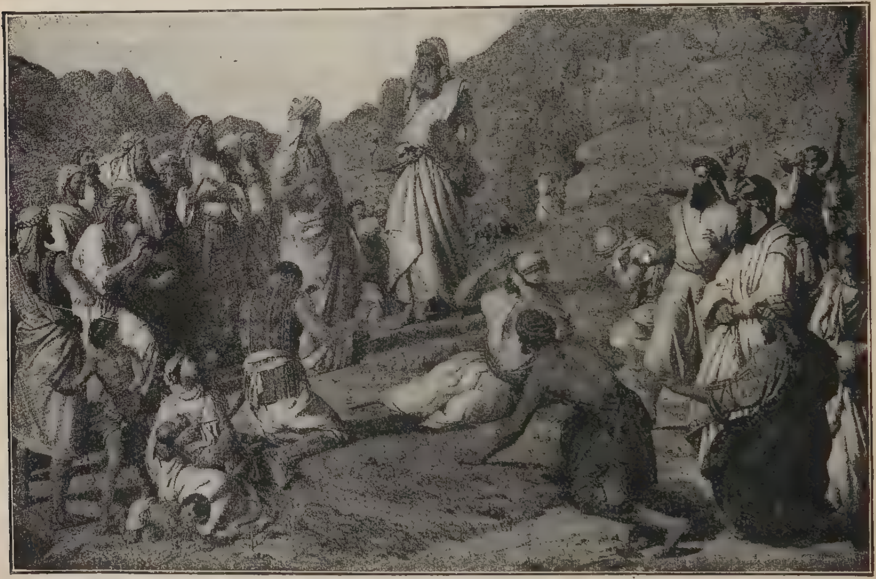


THE SCAPEGOAT.

Then the high-priest came out of the Tabernacle again, and laid his hands on the head of the living goat, the one whose forehead was marked "To be sent away," as if to place upon him the sin of all the people. Then this goat, which was called the "Scapegoat," was led away into the wilderness, to some desolate place from which he would never find his way back to the camp; and there he was left, to wander as he chose. This was to show the sins of the people as taken away, never to come back to them.

When this service was over, the people were looked upon as having their sins forgiven and forgotten by the Lord. Then the regular afternoon offering was given on the altar; and after that the people could go home happy, and end their long fast with all the food that they wished to eat.

In all this God tried to make the people feel that sin is terrible. It separates from God; it brings death; it must be taken away by blood. Thus so long before Chrīṣt came to take away our sins by his death, God showed to men the way of forgiveness and peace.



MŌ'ṢEṢ COMES DOWN FROM MT. SĪ'NĀI WITH TABLES OF STONE.
(See Story Twenty-four.)

Story Thirty-one

THE CLUSTER OF GRAPES FROM THE LAND OF CANAAN

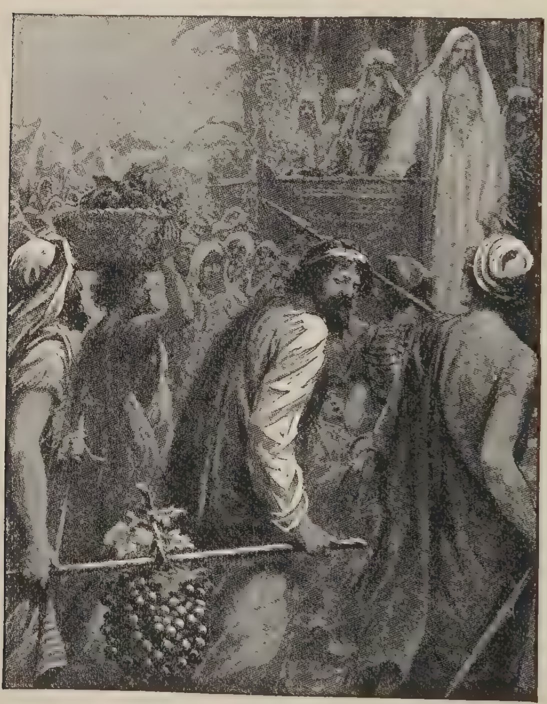
Numbers xiii : 1, to xiv : 45.

THE Ĭş′ra-el-ītes stayed in their camp before Mount Sī′nāï almost a year, while they were building the Tabernacle and learning God's laws given through Mō′şeş. At last the cloud over the Tabernacle rose up; and the people knew that this was the sign for them to move. They took down the Tabernacle and their own tents, and journeyed northward toward the land of Cā′năan for many days led by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night.

At last they came to a place just on the border between the desert and Cā′năan, called Kā′desh, or Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ. Here they stopped to rest, for there were many springs of water and some grass for their cattle. While they were waiting at Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ, and were expecting soon to march into the land which was to be their home, God told Mō′şeş to send onward some men who should walk through the land, and look at it, and then come back and tell what they had found; what kind of a land it was, and what fruits and crops grew in it, and what people were living in it. The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes could more easily win the land, if these men after walking through it could act as their guides, and point out the best places in it and the best plans of making war upon it. There was need of wise and bold men for such a work as this, for it was full of danger.

So Mō′şeş chose out some men of high rank among the people, one ruler from each tribe, twelve men in all. One of these was Jŏsh′u′ȧ, who was the helper of Mō′şeş in caring for the people, and another was Cā′leb, who belonged to the tribe of Jū′dah. These twelve men went out, and walked over the mountains of Cā′năan, and looked at the cities, and saw the fields. In one place, just before they came back to the camp, they cut down a cluster of ripe grapes which was so large that two men carried it between them, hanging from a staff. They named the place where they found this bunch of grapes Ĕsh′cŏl, a word which means "a cluster." These twelve men were called "spies," because they went "to spy out the land." After forty days they came back to the camp; and this was what they said:

"We walked all over the land, and found it a rich land. There is grass for all our flocks, and fields where we can raise grain, and trees bearing fruits, and streams running down the sides of the hills. But we found that the people who live there are very strong, and are men of war. They have cities with walls that reach almost up to the sky; and some of the men are giants, so tall that we felt that we were like grasshoppers beside them."



THE TWO YOUNG MEN CARRIED A CLUSTER OF GRAPES BETWEEN THEM.

One of the spies, who was Că′leb, said, "All that is true, yet we need not be afraid to go up and take the land. It is a good land, well worth fighting for. God is on our side, and he will help us to overcome those people."

But all the other spies, except Jŏsh′u-ȧ, said, "No; there is no use in trying to make war upon such strong people. We can never take those walled cities, and we dare not fight those tall giants."

And the people, who had journeyed all the way through the wilderness to find this very land, were so frightened by the words of the ten spies, that now on the very border of Cā′năan they dared not enter it. They forgot that God had led them out of Ē′ġy̌pt, that he had kept them in the dangers of the desert, that he had given them water out of the rock, and bread from the sky, and his law from the mountain.

All that night, after the spies brought back their report, the people were so filled with fear that they could not sleep. They cried out against Mō′şeş, and blamed him for bringing them out of the land of Ē′ġy̌pt. They forgot all their troubles in Ē′ġy̌pt, their toil and their slavery; and they resolved to go back to that land. They said, "Let us choose a ruler in place of Mō′şeş, who has brought us into all these evils, and let us turn back to the land of Ē′ġy̌pt!"

But Cā′leb and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, two of the spies, said, "Why should we fear? The land of Cā′năan is a good land; it is rich with milk and honey. If God is our friend and is with us, we can easily conquer the people who live there. Above all things, let us not rebel against the Lord or disobey him and make him our enemy."

But the people were so angry with Cā′leb and Jŏsh′u-ȧ that they were ready to stone them and kill them. Then suddenly the people saw a strange sight. The glory of the Lord, which stayed in the Holy of Holies, the inner room of the Tabernacle, now flashed out and shone from the door of the Tabernacle in the faces of the people.

And the Lord out of this glory spoke to Mō′şeş, and said:

"How long will this people disobey me and despise me? They shall not go into the good land that I have promised them. Not one of them shall enter in except Cā′leb and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, who have been faithful to me. All of the people who are twenty years old and over it, shall die in the desert; but their little children shall grow up in the wilderness, and when they become men they shall enter in and own the land that I promised to their fathers. You people are not worthy of the land that I have been keeping for you. Now turn back into the desert, and stay there until you die. After you are dead, Jŏsh′u-ȧ shall lead your children into the land of Cā′năan. And because Cā′leb showed another spirit, and was true to me, and followed my will fully, Cā′leb shall live to go into the land, and shall have his choice of a home there. To-morrow, turn back into the desert by the way of the Red Sea."

And God told Mō′şeş that for every day that the spies had spent in Cā′năan, looking at the land, the people should spend a year in the wilderness; so that they should live in the desert forty years, instead of going at once into the promised land.

When Mō′ṣeṣ told all God's words to the people, they felt worse than before. They changed their minds as suddenly as they had made up their minds. "No," they all said, "we will not go back to the wilderness. We will go straight into the land, and see if we are able to take it, as Jŏsh′u-ȧ and Cā′leb have said."

"You must not go into the land," said Mō′ṣeṣ, "for you are not fit to go; and God will not go with you. You must turn back into the desert, as the Lord has commanded."

But the people would not obey. They rushed up the mountain, and tried to march at once into the land. But they were without leaders and without order, a mob of men untrained and in confusion. And the people in that part of the land, the Cā′năan-ītes and the Ăm′ôr-ītes, came down upon them and killed many of them, and drove them away. Then, discouraged and beaten they obeyed the Lord and Mō′ṣeṣ, and went once more into the desert.

And in the desert of Pā′ran, on the south of the land of Cā′năan, the children of Ĭṣ′ra-el stayed nearly forty years; and all because they would not trust in the Lord.

It was not strange that the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes should act like children, eager to go back one day, and then eager to go forward the next day. Through four hundred years they had been weakened by living in the hot land of Ē′ġ̆ypt; and their hard lot as slaves had made them unfit to care for themselves. They were still in heart slavish and weak. Mō′ṣeṣ saw that they needed the free life of the wilderness; and that their children, growing up as free men and trained for war, would be far better fitted to win the land of promise than they had shown themselves to be. So they went back into the wilderness to wait and to be trained for the work of winning their land in war.

Story Thirty-two

HOW THE LONG JOURNEY OF THE ISRAELITES CAME TO AN END

Numbers xx : 1, to xxii : 1.

SO the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, after coming to the border of the promised land, went back into the wilderness to wait there until all the men who had sinned against the Lord in not trusting his word, should die. Mō′şeş knew that the men who had been slaves in Ē′ġy̆pt were in their spirits slaves still, and could not fight as brave men to win their land. There was need of men who had been trained up to a free life in the wilderness; men who would teach their children after them to be free and bold.

They stayed for nearly all the forty years of waiting in the wilderness of Pā′ran, south of Cā′năan. Very few things happened during those years. The young men as they grew up were trained to be soldiers, and one by one the old men died, until very few of them were left.

When the forty years were almost ended, the people came again to Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ. For some reason they found no water there. Perhaps the wells from which they had drawn water before were now dried up. The people complained against Mō′şeş, as they always complained when trouble came to them, and blamed him for bringing them into such a desert land, where there was neither fruit to eat nor water to drink, only great rocks all around.

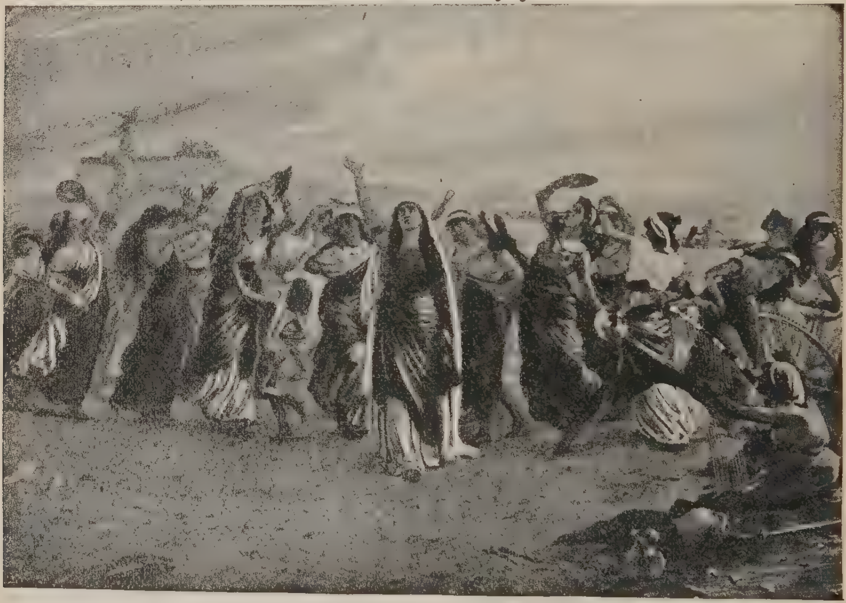
Then the Lord said to Mō′şeş:

"Take the rod, and bring the people together, and stand before the rock, and speak to the rock before them; and then the water will come out of the rock, and the people and their flocks shall drink."

Then Mō′şeş and Aâr′on brought all the people together before a great rock that stood beside the camp. And Mō′şeş stood in front of the rock, with the rod in his hand; but he did not do exactly what God had told him to do, to speak to the rock. He spoke to the people instead, in an angry manner.

"Hear now, ye rebels," said Mō'şeş. "Shall we bring you water out of this rock?"

And Mō'şeş lifted up the rod, and struck the rock. Then he struck it again, and at the second blow the water came pouring out of the rock, just as it had come many years before from the rock at Rĕph'i-dĭm, near Mount Sī'nāi; and again there was a plenty of water for the people and their flocks.



MĬR'Ĭ-AM SINGING THE SONG MŌ'ŞEŞ WROTE.

But God was not pleased with Mō'şeş, because Mō'şeş had shown anger, and had not obeyed God's command just as God had given it. And God said to Mō'şeş and to Aâr'on:

"Because you did not show honor to me, by doing as I commanded you, neither of you shall enter into the land that I have promised to the children of Ĭş'ra-el."

One act of disobedience cost Mō'şeş and Aâr'on the privilege of leading the people into their own land of promise! About this time, Mĭr'ĭ-am, the sister of Mō'şeş and Aâr'on, died at Kā'desh.

bär′ne-ȧ. You remember that when she was a little girl she helped to save the baby Mō′ş̧eş̧, her brother, from the river. She also led the women in singing the song of Mō′şeş after the crossing of the Red Sea. And soon after her death Mō′şeş and Ââr′on, and Ē-le-ā′zar, Ââr′on's son, walked together up a mountain called Hôr; and on the top of the mountain Mō′şeş took off the priest's robes from Ââr′on, and placed them on his son Ē-le-ā′zar; and there on the top of Mount Hôr Ââr′on died, and Mō′şeş and Ē-le-ā′zar buried him. Then they came down to the camp and Ē-le-ā′zar took his father's place as the priest.

While they were at Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ, on the south of Cā′năan, they tried again to enter the land. But they found that the Cā′-năan-ītes and Ăm′ôr-ītes who lived there were too strong for them; so again they turned back to the wilderness, and sought another road to Cā′năan. On the south of the Dead Sea, and southeast of Cā′năan, were living the Ē′dom-ītes, who had sprung from Ē′sạu, Jā′cob's brother, as the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had sprung from Jā′cob. Thus you see the Ē′dom-ītes were closely related to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes.

And Mō′şeş sent to the king of Ē′dom, to say to him:

"We men of Ĭş′ra-el are your brothers. We have come out of the land of Ē′ġy̆pt, where the people of Ē′ġy̆pt dealt harshly with us, and now we are going to our own land, which our God has promised to us, the land of Cā′năan. We pray you let us pass through your land, on our way. We will do no harm to your land nor your people. We will walk on the road to Cā′năan, not turning to the right hand nor the left. And we will not rob your vineyards, nor even drink from your wells, unless we pay for the water that we use."

But the king of Ē′dom was afraid to have such a great host of people, with all their flocks and cattle, go through his land. He drew out his army, and came against the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Mō′şeş was not willing to make war on a people who were so close in their race to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, so instead of leading the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes through Ē′dom, he went around it, making a long journey to the south, and then to the east, and then to the north again.

It was a long, hard journey, through a deep valley which was very hot; and for most of the journey they were going away from Cā′năan, and not toward it; but it was the only way, since Mō′şeş would not let them fight the men of Ē′dom.

While they were on this long journey the people again found fault with Mō′şeş. They said, "Why have you brought us into this hot and sandy country? There is no water; and there is no bread except this vile manna, of which we are very tired! We wish that we were all back in Ē′ġȳpt again!"

Then God was angry with the people; and he let the fierce snakes that grew in the desert crawl among them and bite them. These snakes were called "fiery serpents," perhaps because of their bright color, or perhaps because of their eyes and tongues, which seemed to flash out fire. Their bite was poisonous, so that many of the people died.

Then the people saw that they had acted wickedly in speaking against Mō′şeş; for when they spoke against Mō′şeş they were speaking against God, who was leading them. They said:

"We have sinned against the Lord, and we are sorry. Now pray to the Lord for us, that he may take away the serpents from us."

So Mō′şeş prayed for the people, as he had prayed so many times before. And God heard Mō′şeş' prayer, and God said to him:

"Make a serpent of brass, like the fiery serpents; and set it up on a pole, where the people can see it. Then every one who is bitten may look on the serpent on the pole, and he shall live."

And Mō′şeş did as God commanded him. He made a serpent of brass, which looked like the fiery snakes; and he lifted it up on a pole where all could see it. And then, whoever had been bitten by a snake looked up at the brazen snake, and the bite did him no harm.

This brazen snake was a teaching about Christ, though it was given so long before Christ came. You remember the text which says, "As Mō′şeş lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him may have eternal life."*

Northeast of the Dead Sea, above a brook called the brook Ăr′nŏn, lived a people who were called the Ăm′ôr-ītes. Mō′şeş sent to their king, whose name was Sī′hŏn, the same message as he had sent to the king of Ē′dom, asking for leave to go through his land. But he would not allow the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to pass through. He led his army against Ĭş′ra-el, and crossed the brook Ăr′nŏn, and fought against Ĭş′ra-el at a place called Jā′hăz. The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes here won their first great victory. In the battle they killed many of the

* John iii : 14, 15.

Ăm′ôr-ītes, and with them their king, Sī′hŏn, and they took for their own all their land, as far north as the brook Jăb′bŏk. Do you remember how Jā′cob one night prayed by the brook Jăb′bŏk?

And after this they marched on toward the land of Cā′năan, coming from the east. And at last they encamped on the east bank of the river Jôr′dan, at the foot of the mountains of Mō′ab. Their long journey of forty years was now ended, the desert was left behind them, before them rolled the Jôr′dan river, and beyond the Jôr′dan they could see the hills of the land which God had promised to them for their own.

Story Thirty-three

WHAT A WISE MAN LEARNED FROM AN ASS

Numbers xxii : 2, to xxv : 18; xxxi : 1 to 9.

WHEN the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had travelled around the land of Ē′dom, and encamped beside the river Jôr′dan, a little north of the Dead Sea, they did not sit down to rest, for Mō′şeş knew that a great work was before them, to take the land of Cā′năan. He had already won a great victory over the Ăm′ôr-ītes at Jā′hăz, and slain their king, and won their land. Again Mō′şeş sent out an army into the north, a region called Bā′shăn. There they fought with King Og, who was one of the giants, and killed him, and took his country. This made the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes masters of all the land on the east of the river Jôr′dan, and north of the brook Är′nŏn.

South of the brook Är′nŏn and east of the Dead Sea were living the Mō′ab-ītes. This people had sprung from Lŏt, the nephew of

Ā′bră-hăm, of whom we read in earlier stories. In the five hundred years since Lŏt's time, his family or descendants had become a people who were called Mō′ab-ītes, just as Jā′cob's descendants were the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. The Mō′ab-ītes were filled with alarm and fear as they saw this mighty host of Ĭş′ra-el marching around their land, conquering the country and encamping on their border. The Mō′ab-ītes were ruled by a king whose name was Bā′lăk, and he tried to form some plan for driving away the people of Ĭş′ra-el from that region.

There was at that time a man living far in the east, near the great river Eū-phrā′teş, whose name was Bā′laam. This man was known far and wide as a prophet, that is, a man who talked with God, and heard God's voice, and spoke from God, as did Mō′şeş. People believed that whatever Bā′laam said was sure to come to pass; but they did not know that Bā′laam could only speak what God gave him to speak.

Bā′lăk, the king of the Mō′ab-ītes, sent men to Bā′laam at his home by the river, with great presents. He said to Bā′laam:

"There is a people here who have come up out of Ē′ġy̆pt, and they cover the whole land. I am afraid of them, for they have made war and beaten all the nations around. Come and curse them for me in the name of your God; for I believe that those whom you bless are blessed and prosper, and those whom you curse are cursed and fail."

The men from Mō′ab brought this message and promised to Bā′laam a great reward if he would go with them. And Bā′laam answered them, "Stay here to-night, and I will ask my God what to do."

That night God came to Bā′laam, and said to him:

"Who are these men at your house, and what do they want from you?"

The Lord knew who they were, and what they wanted, for God knows all things. But he wished Bā′laam to tell him. And Bā′laam said:

"They have come from Bā′lăk, the king of Mō′ab, and they ask me to go with them, and to curse for them a people that have come out of Ē′ġy̆pt."

And God said to Bā′laam, "You must not go with these men; you shall not curse this people, for this people are to be blessed."

So the next morning Bā′laam said to the men of Mō′ab, "Go back to your land; for the Lord will not let me go with you."

When these men brought back to their king, Bā′lăk, the message of Bā′laam, the king still thought that Bā′laam would come, if he should offer him more money. So he sent other messengers, of high rank, the princes of Mō′ab, with larger gifts. And they came to Bā′laam, and said:

"Our King Bā′lăk says that you must come: he will give you great honors, and all the money that you ask. Come now, and curse this people for King Bā′lăk."

And Bā′laam said:

"If Bā′lăk should give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot speak anything except what God gives me to speak. Stay here to-night, and I will ask my God what I may say to you."

Now Bā′laam knew very well what God wished him to say; but Bā′laam, though he was a prophet of the Lord, wished to be rich. He wanted to go with the men, and get Bā′lăk's money, but he did not dare to go against God's command. And that night God said to Bā′laam:

"If these men ask you to go with them, you may go; but when you go to Bā′lăk's country, you shall speak only the words that I give you to speak."

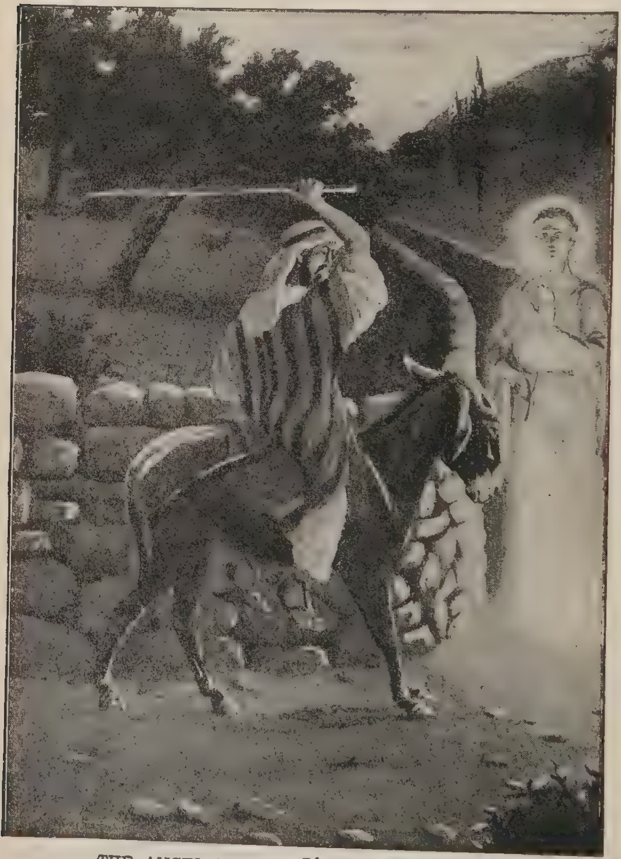
At this Bā′laam was very glad, and the next day he went with the princes of Mō′ab, to go to their land, which was far to the southwest. God was not pleased with Bā′laam's going, for Bā′laam knew very well that God had forbidden him to curse Ĭṣ′ra-el; but he hoped in some way to get King Bā′lăk's money.

And God sent his angel to meet Bā′laam in the way. In order to teach Bā′laam a lesson, the angel appeared first to the ass on which Bā′laam was riding. The ass could see the angel with his fiery sword standing in front of the way, but Bā′laam could not see him. The ass turned to one side, out of the road, into an open field; and Bā′laam struck the ass and drove it back into the road, for he could not see the angel, whom the ass saw.

Then the angel appeared again, in a place where the road was narrow, with a stone wall on each side. And when the ass saw the angel it turned to one side, and crushed Bā′laam's foot against the wall. And Bā′laam struck the ass again.

Again the angel of the Lord appeared to the ass in a place where there was no place to turn aside; and the ass was frightened, and fell down, while Bā'laam struck it again and again with his staff.

Then the Lord allowed the ass to speak; and the ass said to Bā'laam, "What have I done that you have struck me these three times?"



THE ANGEL MEETS BĀ'LAAM IN THE WAY.

And Bā'laam was so angry that he never thought how strange it was for an animal to talk; and he said: "I struck you because you will not walk as you should. I wish that I had a sword in my hand; then I would kill you."

And the ass spoke again to Bā'laam, "Am I not your ass, the one that has always carried you? Did I ever disobey you before? Why do you treat me so cruelly?"

And then God opened Bā'laam's eyes, and let him see the angel standing with a drawn sword in front of him. Then Bā'laam leaped off from the ass to the ground, and fell down upon his face before the angel. And the angel said to Bā'laam, "Bā'laam, you know that you are going in the wrong way. But for the ass, which saw me, I would have killed you. The road that you are taking will lead you to death."

And Bā′laam said, "I have sinned against the Lord; now let the Lord forgive me, and I will go home again."

But the angel knew that in his heart Bā′laam wanted to go on to meet King Bā′lăk; and the angel said:

"You may go with these men of Mō′ab; but be sure to say only what God gives you to speak."

So Bā′laam went on, and came to the land of Mō′ab; and King Bā′lăk said to him:

"So you have come at last! Why did you wait until I sent the second time? Do you not know that I will pay you all that you want, if you will only do what I wish?"

And Bā′laam said, "I have come to you as you asked; but I have no power to speak anything except what God gives me."

King Bā′lăk thought that all Bā′laam said about speaking God's word was spoken only to get more money. He did not understand that a true prophet could never say anything except what was the will of God. He took Bā′laam up to the top of a mountain, from which they could look down upon the camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, as it lay with tents spread on the plain, and the Tabernacle in the middle, overshadowed by the white cloud.

Then Bā′laam said, "Build for me seven altars, and bring me for an offering seven young oxen and seven rams."

They did so, and while the offering was on the altar God gave a word to Bā′laam; and then Bā′laam spoke out God's word:

"The king of Mō′ab has brought me from the east, saying, 'Come, curse Jā′cob for me; come, speak against Ĭş′ra-el.' How shall I curse those whom God has not cursed? How shall I speak against those who are God's own people? From the mountain-top I see this people dwelling alone and not like other nations. Who can count the men of Ĭş′ra-el, like the dust of the earth? Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his!"

And King Bā′lăk was surprised at Bā′laam's words. He said:

"What have you done? I brought you to curse my enemies, and instead you have blessed them!"

And Bā′laam answered, "Did I not tell you beforehand, that I could only say the words that God should put into my mouth?"

But King Bā′lăk thought that he would try again to obtain from Bā′laam a curse against Ĭş′ra-el. He brought him to another place, where they could look down on the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, and again offered sacrifices. And again God gave a message to Bā′laam; and Bā′laam said:

"Rise up, King Bā′lăk, and hear. God is not a man, that he should lie, or that he should change his mind. What God has said, that he will do. He has commanded me to bless this people; yea, and blessed shall they be. The Lord God is their king, and he shall lead them, and give them victory."

Then King Bā′lăk said to Bā′laam:

"If you cannot curse this people, do not bless them, but leave them alone!"

And Bā′laam said again, "Did I not tell you, that what God gives me to speak, that I must speak?"

But King Bā′lăk was not yet satisfied. He brought Bā′laam to still another place, and offered sacrifices as before. And again the Spirit of God came on Bā′laam. Looking down on the camp of Ĭş′ra-el, he said:

"How goodly are your tents, O Ĭş′ra-el! and your tabernacles, O Jā′cob! God has brought him out of Ē′ġȳpt; and God shall give him the land of promise. He shall destroy his enemies; Ĭş′ra-el shall be like a lion when he rises up. Blessed be every one who blesses him; and cursed be every one that curses him!"

And Bā′lăk, the king of Mō′ab, was very angry with Bā′laam the prophet.

"I called you," said Bā′lăk, "to curse my enemies; and you have blessed them over and over again. Go back to your own home. I meant to give you great honor and riches; but your God has kept you back from your reward!"

And Bā′laam said to Bā′lăk:

"Did I not say to your messengers, 'If Bā′lăk should give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond God's command, to say good or evil? What God speaks, that I must speak.' Now let me tell you what this people shall do to your people in the years to come. A star shall come out of Jā′cob, and a scepter shall be stretched forth from Ĭş′ra-el that shall rule over Mō′ab. All these lands, Ē′dom, and Mount Sē′īr, and Mō′ab, and Ăm′mŏn shall some time be under the rule of Ĭş′ra-el."

And all this came to pass, though it was four hundred years afterward, when Dā′vid, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, made all those countries subject to his rule.

But Bā′laam soon showed that although for a time God spoke through his lips, in his heart he was no true servant of God. Although he could not speak a curse against the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, he still longed for the money that King Bā′lăk was ready to give him if he would only help Bā′lăk to weaken the power of Ĭş′ra-el. And he tried another plan to do harm to Ĭş′ra-el.

Bā′laam told King Bā′lăk that the best plan for him and his people would be to make the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes their friends, to marry among them, and not to make war upon them. And this the Mō′ab-ītes did; until many of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes married the daughters of Mō′ab, and then they began to worship the idols of Mō′ab.

This was worse for the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes than making war upon them. For if the people of Ĭş′ra-el should be friendly with the idol-worshipping people around them, the Mō′ab-ītes east of the Dead Sea, the Ăm′mŏn-ītes near the wilderness, and the Ē′dom-ītes on the south, they would soon forget the Lord, and begin to worship idols.

There was danger that all the people would be led into sin. And God sent a plague of death upon the people, and many died. Then Mō′şeş took the men who were leading Ĭş′ra-el into sin, and put them to death. And after this the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes made war upon the Mō′ab-ītes, and their neighbors, the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes, who were joined with them. They beat them in a great battle, and killed many of them. And among the men of Mō′ab they found Bā′laam the prophet; and they killed him also, because he had given advice to the Mō′ab-ītes which brought harm to Ĭş′ra-el.

It would have been better for Bā′laam to have stayed at home, and not to have come when King Bā′lăk called him; or it would have been well for him to have gone back to his home when the angel met him. He might then have lived in honor; but he knew God's will, and tried to go against it, and died in disgrace among the enemies of God's people.

Story Thirty-four

HOW MOSES LOOKED UPON THE PROMISED LAND

Numbers xxvi : 1 to 4, 63 to 65; xxxii : 1 to 42; Deuteronomy xxxi : 1, to xxxiv : 12.

WHILE the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were in their camp on the plain beside the river Jôr′dan, at the foot of the mountains of Mō′ab, God told Mō′şeş to count the number of the men who were old enough and strong enough to go forth to war. And Mō′şeş caused the men to be counted who were above twenty years of age, and found them to be a little more than six hundred thousand in number. Besides these were the women and children.

And among them all were only three men who were above sixty years of age, men who had been more than twenty years old forty years before, when the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes came out of Ē′ġy̆pt. The men who had been afraid to enter the land of Cā′năan, when they were at Kā′desh-bär′ne-ȧ the first time, had all died. Some of them had been slain by the enemies in war; some had died in the wilderness during the forty years; some had perished by the plague; some had been bitten by the fiery serpents. Of all those who had come out of Ē′ġy̆pt as men, the only ones living were Mō′şeş, and Jŏsh-u′ȧ, and Cā′leb. Mō′şeş was now a hundred and twenty years old. He had lived forty years as a prince in Ē′ġy̆pt, forty years as a shepherd in Mĭd′ĭ-an, and forty years as the leader of Ĭş′ra-el in the wilderness. But although he was so very old, God had kept his strength. His eyes were as bright, his mind was as clear, and his arm and heart were as strong as they had been when he was a young man.

The people of Ĭş′ra-el had now full possession of all the land on the east of the river Jôr′dan, from the brook Är′nŏn up to the great Mount Hĕr′mon. Much of this land was well fitted for pasture;

for grass was green and rich, and there were many streams of water. There were two of the twelve tribes, and half of another tribe, whose people had great flocks of sheep and goats, and herds of cattle. These were the tribes which had sprung from Reṳ′ben and Găd, the sons of Jā′cob, and half of the tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh, the son of Jō′s̤eph. For there were two tribes that had sprung from Jō′s̤eph, his descendants, the tribes of Ē′phră-ĭm and Mȧ-năs′seh.

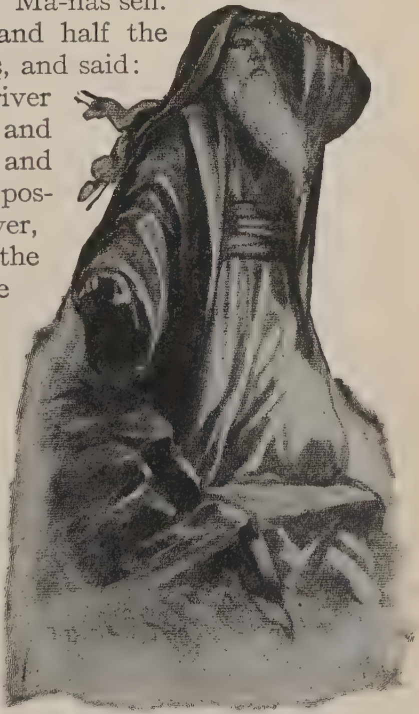
The men of Reṳ′ben, Găd, and half the men of Mȧ-năs′seh came to Mō′s̤es̤, and said:

"The land on this side of the river is good for the feeding of sheep and cattle; and we are shepherds and herdsmen. Cannot we have our possessions on this side of the river, and give all the land beyond the river to our brothers of the other tribes?"

Mō′s̤es̤ was not pleased at this; for he thought that the men of these tribes wished to have their home at once in order to avoid going to war with the rest of the tribes; and this may have been in their minds.

So Mō′s̤es̤ said to them:

"Shall your brothers of the other tribes go to the war? And shall you sit here in your own land, and not help them? That would be wicked, and would displease the Lord your God." Then the men of the two tribes and the half-tribe came again to Mō′s̤es̤, and said to him:



MŌ′S̤ES̤ LOOKS UPON THE PROMISED LAND.

"We will build sheepfolds here for our sheep, and we will choose some cities to place our wives and our children in; but we ourselves will go armed with our brothers of the other tribes, and will help them to take the land on the other side of the Jôr′dan. We will not come back to this side of the river until the war is over, and our brothers have taken their shares of the land, each tribe its own part; and we will take no part on the other side of the river, because our place has been given to us here. And when the land is all won and divided, then we will come back here to our wives and our children."

Then Mō′şeş was satisfied with the promise that they had given, and he divided the land on the east of the Jôr′dan to these tribes. To the men of Reu̥′ben he gave the land on the south; to the men of Găd the land in the middle; and to the half-tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh the land on the north, the country called Bā′shăn. And after their wives and children and flocks had been placed safely, the men of war came to the camp, ready to go with the other tribes across the river when God should call them.

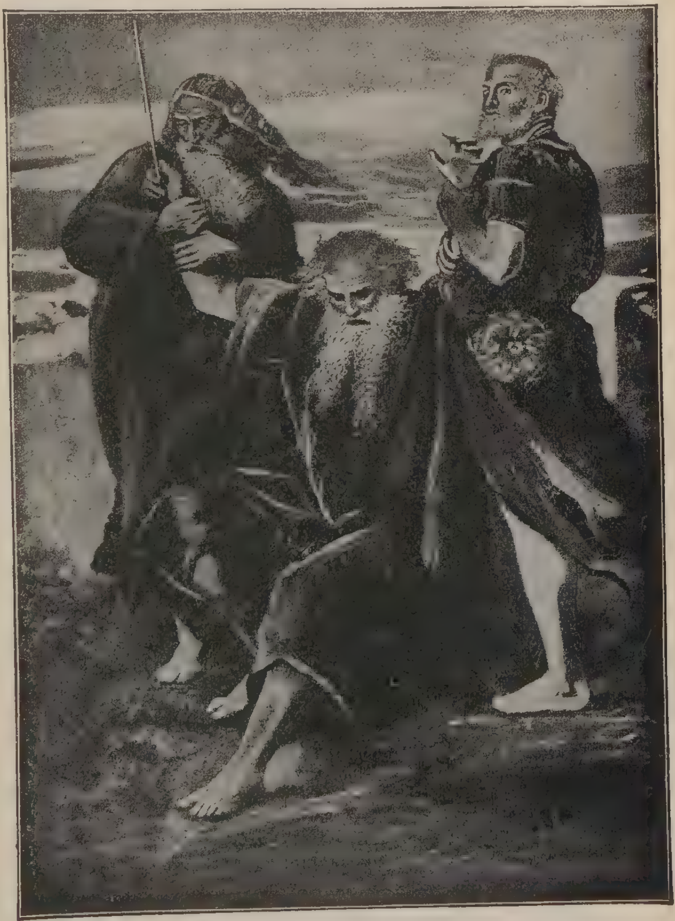
And now the work of Mō′şeş was almost done. God said to him:

"Gather the children of Ĭş′ra-el together, and speak to them your last words, for you are not to lead the people across the Jôr′dan. You are to die in this land, as I said to you at Kā′desh." (See Story Thirty-one.)

Then Mō′şeş called the leaders of the twelve tribes before his tent, and said to them many things, which you can read in the book of the Bible called Deuteronomy. There all the long speech of Mō′şeş is given. He told them what wonderful things God had done for their fathers and for them. He gave them again all the words of God's law. He told them that they must not only keep God's law themselves, but must teach it to their children, so that it might never be forgotten. And Mō′şeş sang a song of farewell, and wrote down all his last words.

Then he gave a charge to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, whom God had chosen to take his place as the ruler and leader of the people: though no man could take Mō′şeş' place as a prophet of God and the giver of God's law. He laid his hands on Jŏsh′u-ȧ's head; and God gave to Jŏsh′u-ȧ some of his spirit that had been on Mō′şeş.

Then Mō′şeş, all alone, went out of the camp, while all the people looked at him and wept. Slowly he walked up the mountain side, until they saw him no more. He climbed to the top of Mount Nē′bō, and stood alone upon the height, and looked at the Land of Promise, which lay spread out before him. Far in the north he could see the white crown of Mount Hẽr′mon, where there is always snow. At his feet, but far below, the river Jôr′dan was winding its way down to the Dead Sea. Across the river, at the foot of the mountains, was standing the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō, surrounded with a high wall. On the summits of the mountains beyond he could see Hē′bron, where Ā′bră-hăm, and Ĭ′şaac, and Jā′cob were buried; he could see Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm, and Bĕth′=el, and the two mountains where Shē′-chem lay hidden in the center of the land. And here and there, through the valleys, he could see afar in the west the gleaming water of the Great Sea.



MŌ′ŞEŞ′ HANDS UPHELD.

Then Mō′şeş, all alone, lay down on the mountain's top, and died. Aâr′on and Hûr, who had held up the hands of Mō′şeş in battle, had both died; and there was no man on Mount Nē′bȯ to bury Mō′şeş; so God himself buried him, and no man knows where God laid the body of Mō′şeş, who had served God so faithfully.

And after Mō′şeş there was never a man who lived so near to God, and talked with God so freely, as one would talk face to face with his friend, until long afterward Jē′şuş Chrīst, the Son of God, and greater than Mō′şeş, came among men.

Story Thirty-five

THE STORY OF JOB

Job i : 1, to ii : 13; xlii : 1 to 17.

AT some time in those early days—we do not know just at what time, whether in the days of Mō′şeş or later—there was living a good man named Jōb. His home was in the land of Ŭz, which may have been on the edge of the desert, east of the land of Ĭş′ra-el. Jōb was a very rich man. He had sheep, and camels, and oxen, and asses, counted by the thousand. In all the east there was no other man so rich as Jōb.

And Jōb was a good man. He served the Lord God, and prayed to God every day, with an offering upon God's altar, as men worshipped in those times. He tried to live as God wished him to live, and was always kind and gentle. Every day, when his sons were out in the field, or were having a feast together in the house of any of them, Jōb went out to his altar, and offered a burnt-offering for each one of his sons and his daughters, and prayed to God for them; for he said:

"It may be that my sons have sinned or have turned away from God in their hearts; and I will pray God to forgive them."

At one time, when the angels of God stood before the Lord, Sā′tan the Evil One came also, and stood among them, as though he were one of God's angels. The Lord God saw Sā′tan, and said to him, "Sā'tan, from what place have you come?" "I have come," answered Sā'tan, "from going up and down in the earth and looking at the people upon it."

Then the Lord said to Sā'tan, "Have you looked at my servant Jōb? And have you seen that there is not another man like him in the earth, a good and a perfect man, one who fears God and does nothing evil?" Then Sā'tan said to the Lord: "Does Jōb fear God for nothing? Hast thou not made a wall around him, and around his house, and around everything that he has? Thou hast given a blessing upon his work, and hast made him rich. But if thou wilt stretch forth thy hand, and take away from him all that he has, then he will turn away from thee and will curse thee to thy face."

THE WELL OF JŌB.

Then the Lord said to the Evil One, "Sā'tan, all that Jōb has is in your power; you can do to his sons, and his flocks, and his cattle, whatever you wish; only lay not your hand upon the man himself."

Then Sā'tan went forth from before the Lord; and soon trouble began to come upon Jōb. One day, when all his sons and daughters were eating and drinking together in their oldest brother's house, a man came running to Jōb, and said:

"The oxen were plowing, and the asses were feeding beside them, when the wild men from the desert came upon them, and drove them all away; and the men who were working with the oxen and caring for the asses have all been killed; and I am the only one who has fled away alive!"

While this man was speaking, another man came rushing in; and he said:

"The lightning from the clouds has fallen on all the sheep, and on the men who were tending them; and I am the only one who has come away alive!"

Before this man had ended, another came in; and he said:

"The enemies from Chăl-de'ȧ have come in three bands, and have taken away all the camels. They have killed the men who were with them; and I am the only one left alive!"

Then at the same time, one more man came in, and said to Jōb:

"Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking together in their oldest brother's house, when a sudden and terrible wind from the desert struck the house, and it fell upon them. All your sons and your daughters are dead, and I alone have lived to tell you of it."

Thus in one day, all that Jōb had—his flocks, and his cattle, and his sons and his daughters—all were taken away; and Jōb, from being rich, was suddenly made poor. Then Jōb fell down upon his face before the Lord, and he said:

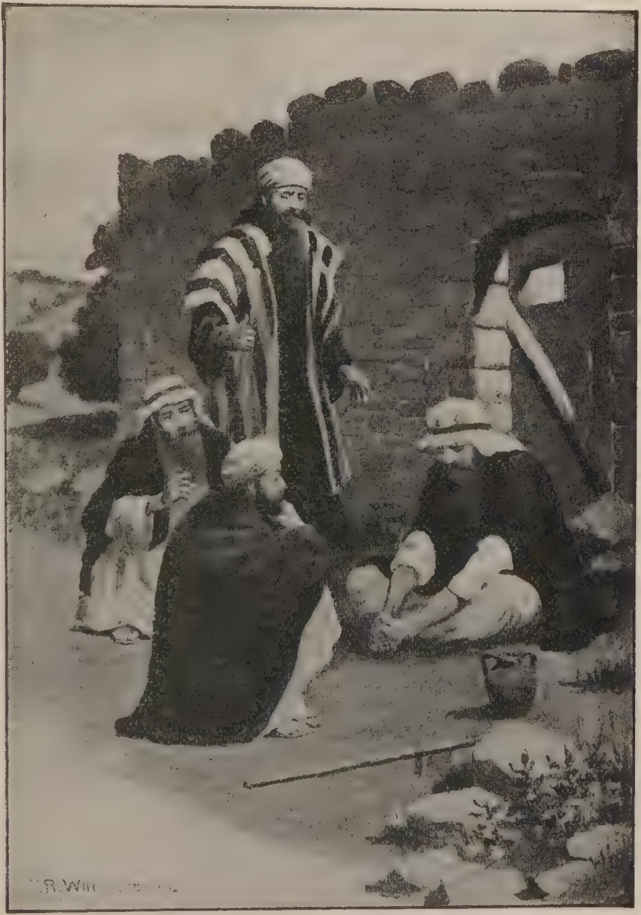
"With nothing I came into the world, and with nothing I shall leave it. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

So even when all was taken from him Jōb did not turn away from God, nor did he find fault with God's doings.

And again the angels of God were before the Lord, and Sā'tan, who had done all this harm to Jōb, was among them. The Lord said to Sā'tan, "Have you looked at my servant Jōb? There is no other man in the world as good as he; a perfect man, one that fears God and does no wrong act. Do you see how he holds fast to his goodness, even after I have let you do him so great harm?" Then Sā'tan answered the Lord, "All that a man has he will give for his life. But if thou wilt put thy hand upon him and touch his bone and his flesh, he will turn from thee, and will curse thee to thy face."

And the Lord said to Sā'tan, "I will give Jōb into your hand; do to him whatever you please; only spare his life."

Then Sā′tan went out and struck Jōb, and caused dreadful boils to come upon him, over all his body, from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. And Jōb sat down in the ashes in great pain; but he would not speak one word against God. His wife said to him, "What is the use of trying to serve God? You may as well curse God, and die!"



THREE FRIENDS COME TO SEE JŌB.

But Jōb said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women. What? shall we take good things from the Lord? and shall we not take evil things also?" So Jōb would not speak against God. Then three friends of Jōb came to see him, and to try to comfort him in his sorrow and pain. Their names were Ĕli′-phăz, and Bĭl′dăd, and Zō′phar. They sat down with Jōb, and wept, and spoke to him. But their words were not words of comfort. They believed that all these great troubles had come upon Jōb to punish him for some great sin, and they tried to persuade Jōb to tell what evil things he had done, to make God so angry with him.

For in those times most people believed that trouble, and sickness, and the loss of friends, and the loss of what they had owned, came to men because God was angry with them on account of their sins. These men thought that Jōb must have been very wicked because they saw such evils coming upon him. They made long speeches to Jōb, urging him to confess his wickedness.

Jōb said that he had done no wrong, that he had tried to do right; and he did not know why these troubles had come; but he would not say that God had dealt unjustly in letting him suffer. Jōb did not understand God's ways, but he believed that God was good; and he left himself in God's hands. And at last God himself spoke to Jōb and to his friends, telling them that it is not for man to judge God, and that God will do right by every man. And the Lord said to the three friends of Jōb:

"You have not spoken of me what is right, as Jōb has. Now bring an offering to me; and Jōb shall pray for you, and for his sake I will forgive you."

So Jōb prayed for his friends, and God forgave them. And because in all his troubles Jōb had been faithful to God, the Lord blessed Jōb once more, and took away his boils from him, and made him well. Then the Lord gave to Jōb more than he had ever owned in the past, twice as many sheep, and oxen, and camels, and asses. And God gave again to Jōb seven sons and three daughters; and in all the land there were no women found so lovely as the daughters of Jōb. After his trouble, Jōb lived a long time, in riches, and honor, and goodness, under God's care.

Part Second

Stories of Joshua and the Judges

Story One

THE STORY OF A SCARLET CORD

Joshua i : 1, to ii : 24.

AFTER the death of Mō′şeş, while the children of Ĭş′ra-el were still encamped upon the east bank of the river Jôr′dan, God spoke to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, and said:

"Now that Mō′şeş my servant is dead, you are to take his place and to rule this people. Do not delay, but lead them across the river Jôr′dan, and conquer the land which I have given to them."

Then God told Jŏsh′u-ȧ how large would be the land which the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were to have, if they should show themselves worthy of it. It was to reach from the great river Eū′phrā-teş, far in the north, down to the border of Ē′ġy̆pt on the south, and from the desert on the east to the Great Sea on the west. And God said to Jŏsh′u-ȧ:

"Be strong and of a good courage. I will be with you as I was with Mō′şeş. Read constantly the book of the law which Mō′şeş gave you, and be careful to obey all that is written in it. Do this and you will have good success."

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ gave orders to his officers. He said, "Go through the camp, and tell the people to prepare food for a journey; for in three days we shall pass over the river Jôr′dan, and shall go into the land which the Lord has promised us."

To say this was very bold; for at that time of the year, in the spring, the Jôr′dan was much larger than at other times. All its banks were overflowed, and it was running as a broad, deep, swift river, down to the Dead Sea, a few miles to the south. No one could possibly walk through it; only a strong man could swim in its powerful current; and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had no boats in which they could cross it.

On the other side of the river, a few miles distant, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes could see the high walls of the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō, standing at the foot of the mountains. Before the rest of the land could be won, this city must be taken, for it stood beside the road leading up to the mountain country.

Jŏsh′u-ȧ chose two careful, brave, and wise men, and said to them, "Go across the river, and get into the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō; find out all you can about it, and come back in two days."

The two men swam across the river, and walked over to Jĕr′ĭ-chō, and went into the city. But they had been seen, and the king of Jĕr′ĭ-chō sent men to take them prisoners. They came to a house which stood on the wall of the city, where was living a woman named Rā′hăb; and she hid the men.

But these strange men had been seen going into her house, and the king sent his officers after them. The woman hid the men on the roof of the house, and heaped over them stalks of flax, which are like long reeds, so that the officers could not find them. After the officers had gone away, thinking that the two spies had left the city, the woman Rā′hăb came to the two men, and said to them:

"All of us in this city know that your God is mighty and terrible, and that he has given you this land. We have heard how your God dried up the Red Sea before you, and led you through the desert, and gave you victory over your enemies. And now all the people in this city are in fear of you, for they know that your God will give you this city and all this land."

"Now," said Rā′hăb, "promise me in the name of the Lord, that you will spare my life, and the lives of my father and mother, and of my brothers and sisters, when you take this city."

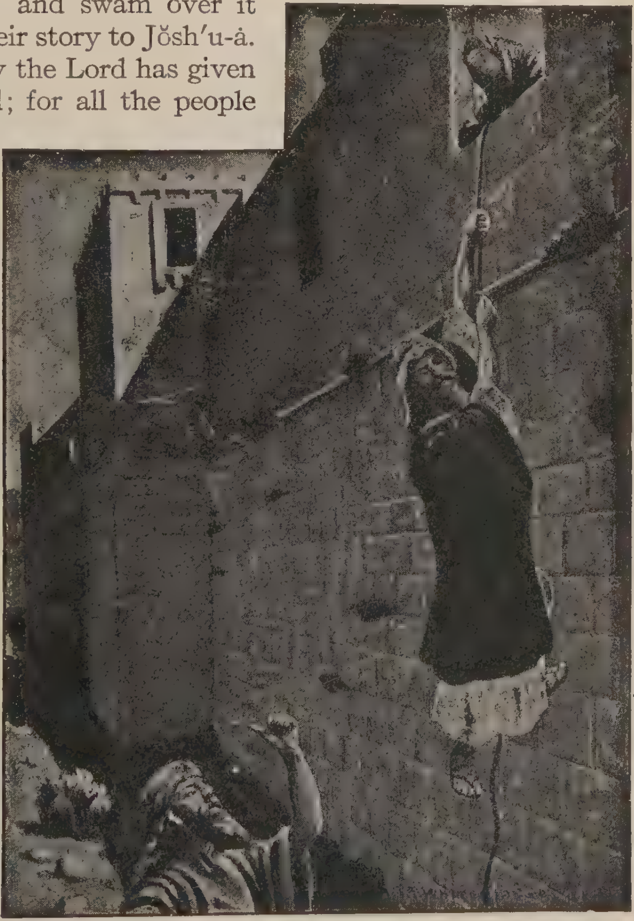
And the men said, "We will pledge our life for yours, that no harm shall come to you; for you have saved our lives."

This woman's house stood on the wall of the city. From one of its windows Rā′hăb let down outside a rope, upon which the men could slide down to the ground. It happened that this rope was of a bright scarlet color.

The two spies said to Rā′hăb, "When our men come to take this city, you shall have this scarlet rope hanging in the window. Bring your father, and mother, and family into the house, and keep them there while we are taking the city. We will tell all our men not to harm the people who are in the house where the scarlet cord hangs from the window; and thus all your family will be safe when the city is taken."

Then the two men, at night, slid down the rope and found their way to the river, and swam over it again, and told their story to Jŏsh′u-ȧ. They said, "Truly the Lord has given to us all the land; for all the people in it are in terror before us, and will not dare to oppose us."

One fact was a great help to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes in their plans for taking the land of Cā′năan. It was not held by one people, or ruled over by one king, who could unite all his people against the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. There were many small nations living in the land, and each little tribe, and even each city, was ruled by its own king. So it would be easy for the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to destroy them one by one, so long as they kept apart and did not band themselves together into one army.



THE TWO SPIES LET DOWN BY A ROPE.

The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were now a strong and united people, trained for war, and willing to obey one leader, so that all the twelve tribes were ready to fight as one man.

Story Two

HOW THE RIVER JORDAN BECAME DRY, AND THE WALLS OF JERICHO FELL DOWN

Joshua iii : 1, to vi : 27

AFTER the two spies had come back from Jĕr′ĭ-chō to the camp of Ĭş′ra-el, Jŏsh′u-ȧ commanded the people to take down their tents and remove from their camping place to the bank of the river Jôr′dan. Then the priests took apart the Tabernacle, and covered the ark and all the furniture in the Holy Place; and ran the poles through the rings for carrying the altar, and made ready for leaving the camp. At the same time the people took down their tents, and rolled them up, and brought together their flocks and cattle, and stood ready to march.

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ gave the word, and they marched down toward the river, which was rolling high and strong in front of them. Jŏsh′u-ȧ said:

"Let the priests carry the ark of the covenant in front, and let there be a space between it and the rest of the people of three thousand feet. Do not come nearer than that space to the ark."

And all the people stood still, wondering, while the ark was brought on the shoulders of the priests far out in front of the ranks of men, until it came down to the very edge of the water. They could not see the ark, for it was covered, but they knew that it was under its coverings on the shoulders of the priests.

Then said Jŏsh′u-ȧ to the priests, "Now walk into the water of the river."

Then a most wonderful thing took place. As soon as the feet of the priests touched the water by the shore, the river above stopped flowing, and far away, up the river, they could see the water rising and piling up like a great heap. And below the place where they were standing the water ran on, until it left a great place dry, and the stones on the river's bed were uncovered. Then, at Jŏsh′u-ȧ's command, the priests carried the ark down to the middle of the dry bed of the river, and stood there with it on their shoulders.

And Jŏsh′u-ȧ gave order to the people to march across the river. In front came the soldiers from Reṳ′ben, Găd, and the half-tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh, who had already received their homes on the east of the river, but were with the other tribes to help in the war. After them came all the other tribes, each by itself, until they had all passed over the river; and all this time the priests stood on the river's dry bed holding the ark.

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ called for twelve men, one man from each tribe and he said to them:

"Go down into the river and bring up from it twelve stones, as large stones as you can carry, from the place where the priests are standing."

They did so; and with these stones Jŏsh′u-ȧ made a stone-heap on the bank; and he said:

"Let this heap of stones stand here to keep in memory what has taken place to-day. When your children shall ask you, 'Why are these stones here?' you shall say to them, 'Because here the Lord God made the river dry before the ark of the covenant, so that the people could cross over into the land that God had promised to their fathers.'"

And Jŏsh′u-ȧ told these twelve men to take also twelve other stones, and heap them up in the bed of the river where the priests stood with the ark, so that these stones also might stand to remind all who should see them of God's wonderful help to his people.

When all this had been done, and the two heaps of stone had been piled up, one on the bank, the other in the bed of the river, Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to the priests, "Come now up from the river, and bring the ark to the shore."

They did so; and then the waters began to flow down from above, until soon the river Jôr′dan was rolling by as it had rolled before. So now at last the children of Ĭs̱′ra-el were safely in the land which God had promised to their fathers more than five hundred years before.

They set up a new camp, with the Tabernacle in the middle, the altar before it, and the tents of the tribes around it in order

The place of the camp was near the river, on the plain of Jôr′dan, and was called Gĭl′găl. And there the main camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes was kept all the time that they were carrying on the war to win the land of Cā′năan.

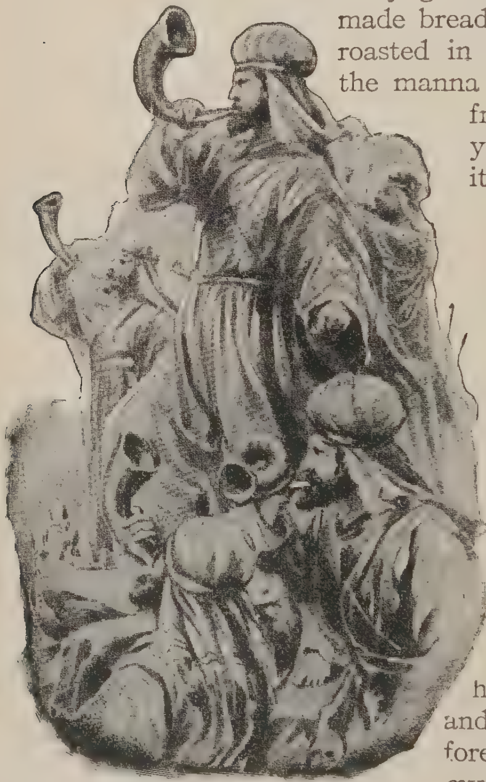
When they came into the land, it was the time of the early harvest; and in the fields they found grain and barley in abundance. They gathered it, and ground it, and made bread of it; and some of it they roasted in the ear; and on that day the manna which God had sent them from the sky through forty years ceased to fall, now that it was needed no more.

There, in full view of the new camp, stood the strong walls of Jĕr′ĭ-chō. Jŏsh′u-ȧ went out to look at the city; and he saw a man all armed coming toward him. Jŏsh′u-ȧ walked boldly up to the man, and said to him, "Are you on our side, or are you one of our enemies?"

And he said, "No; but as captain of the Lord's host have I come."

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ saw that he was the angel of the Lord; and Jŏsh′u-ȧ bowing down before him, said, "What word has my Lord to his servant?"

And the captain of the Lord's host said to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, "Take off your shoes from your feet, for it is holy ground where you are standing."



THE PRIESTS BLOWING THEIR HORNS.

Jŏsh′u-ȧ did so; for the one who was speaking to him was not merely an angel, but the Lord himself appearing as a man. And the Lord said to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, "I have given to you Jĕr′ĭ-chō, and its king, and its mighty men of war· and I will destroy the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō before you."

Then the Lord told Jŏsh′u-ȧ the way in which the city should be taken; and Jŏsh′u-ȧ went back to the camp at Ḡĭl′găl, and made ready to march as God commanded. During the next seven days all that was done was according to the word spoken by the Lord to Jŏsh′u-ȧ.

They drew out the army as if to fight against the city. In front came the soldiers from the tribes on the east of the river. Then came a company of priests with trumpets made of rams' horns, which they blew long and loud. Then came the ark of the covenant, borne on the shoulders of the priests. And, last of all came the host of Ĭş′ra-el, marching in order. No one shouted, nor was any noise heard, except the sound of the rams'-horn trumpets. They marched around the walls of Jĕr′ĭ-chō once on that day, and then all marched back to the camp.

The next morning they all formed in the same order, and again marched around the walls of the city; and so they did again and again, marching once each day for six days.

On the seventh day, by God's command, they rose very early in the morning, and did not stop when they had marched around the walls once; but kept on marching round and round, until they had gone about the walls seven times. As they went by they saw at one window on the wall a scarlet cord hanging down; and they knew that this was the house of Rā′hăb, who had saved the lives of the two spies.

When the seventh march was ended, they all stood still. Even the trumpets ceased, and there was a great silence for a moment, until the voice of Jŏsh′u-ȧ rang out, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!"

Then a great shout went up from the host; and they looked at the wall, and saw that it was trembling, and shaking, and falling! It fell down flat at every place but one. There was one part of the wall left standing, where the scarlet cord was hanging from the window.

And Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to the two spies, "Go and bring out Rā′hăb and her family, and take them to a safe place."

They went into Rā′hăb's house on the wall and brought her out, and with her her father and mother, and all their family.

They cared for them, and kept them safely in the camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes until all the war against the people of the land was ended.

While some of the soldiers were taking care of Rā′hăb, all the rest of the army was climbing up over the ruined wall. The people in the city were so filled with fear when they saw the walls falling down on every side, that they did not try to defend it, but sank down helpless and were slain or taken prisoners by the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes.

Thus the city was taken, with all that was within it. But the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were forbidden to use for themselves any of the treasures in the city. Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to them, "Nothing in this city belongs to you. It is the Lord's, and is to be destroyed as an offering to the Lord."

So they brought together all the gold, and silver, and precious things, and all that was in the houses. They took nothing for themselves, but kept the gold and silver and the things made of brass and iron for the Tabernacle. All the rest of what they found in the city they burned and destroyed, leaving of the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō nothing but a waste and a desolation. And Jŏsh′u-ȧ said:

"Let the Lord's curse rest on any man who shall ever build again the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō. With the loss of his oldest born shall he lay its foundation, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."

After this Rā′hăb, the woman who had saved the spies, was taken among the people of Ĭş′ra-el just as though she had been an Ĭş′ra-el-īte born. And one of the nobles of the tribe of Jū′dah, whose name was Săl′mŏn, took her for his wife. And from her line of descendants, of those who came from her, many years after this, was born Dā′vid the king. She was saved and blessed, because she had faith in the God of Ĭş′ra-el.

Story Three

THE STORY OF A WEDGE OF GOLD

Joshua vii : 1, to viii : 35.

WHILE the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes at God's word were destroying the city of Jĕr′ĭ-chō there was one man who disobeyed God's command. A man named Ā′chăn, of the tribe of Jū′dah, saw in one house a beautiful garment that had come from Băb′ȳ-lon, and a wedge-shaped piece of gold and some silver. He looked at it, longed to have it for his own, took it secretly to his tent, and hid it. He thought that no one had seen him do this thing. But God saw it all; and Ā′chăn's robbery of God, to whom everything belonged that was in Jĕr′ĭ-chō, brought great trouble to Ĭş′ra-el.

From Jĕr′ĭ-chō there was a road up the ravines and valleys leading to the mountain country. On one of the hills above the plain stood a little city called Ā′ī. Jŏsh′u-ȧ did not think it needful for all the army to go and take Ā′ī, because it was a small place. So he sent a small army of three thousand men. But the men of Ā′ī came out against them, and killed a number of them, and drove them away, so that they failed to take the city.

And when the rest of the people heard of this defeat they were filled with fear. Jŏsh′u-ȧ was alarmed, not because he was afraid of the Cā′năan-ītes, but because he knew that God was not with the men who went against Ā′ī. And Jŏsh′u-ȧ fell on his face before the Lord, and said:

"O Lord God, why hast thou led us across Jôr′dan only to let us fall before our enemies? What shall I say, O Lord, now that the men of Ĭş′ra-el have been beaten and driven away?"

And God said to Jŏsh′u-ȧ:

"Ĭş′ra-el has sinned. They have disobeyed my words, and have broken their promise. They have taken the treasure that belongs to me, and have kept it. And that is the reason why I have left them to suffer from their enemies. My curse shall rest on the people until they bring back that which is stolen, and punish the man who robbed me." And God told Jŏsh′u-ȧ how to find the man who had done this evil thing.

The next morning, very early, Jŏsh′u-ȧ called all the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el to come before him. When the tribe of Jū′dah came near God showed to Jŏsh′u-ȧ that this was the tribe. Then as the divisions of Jū′dah came by God pointed out one division; and in that division one family, and in that family one household, and in that household one man. Ā′chăn was singled out as the man who had robbed God.

And Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to Ā′chăn, "My son, give honor to the Lord God, and confess your sin to him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not try to hide it from me."

And Ā′chăn said, "I have sinned against the Lord. I saw in Jĕr′ĭ-chō a garment from Băb′y̆-lon, and a wedge of gold, and some pieces of silver, and I hid them in my tent." Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ sent messengers, who ran to the tent of Ā′chăn, and found the hidden things, and brought them out before all the people.

Then, because Ā′chăn's crime had harmed all the people, and because his children were with him in the crime, they took them all, Ā′chăn, and his sons and his daughters, and the treasure that had been stolen, and even his sheep and his oxen, and his tent, and all that was in it. And the people threw stones upon them until all were dead; then they burned their bodies and all the things in the tent. And over the ashes they piled up a heap of stones, so that all who saw it would remember what came to Ā′chăn for his sin.

Thus did God show to his people how careful they must be to obey his commands, if they would have God with them. After this Jŏsh′u-ȧ sent another army, larger than before, against Ā′ī. And they took the city, and destroyed it, as they had destroyed Jĕr′ĭ-chō. But God allowed the people to take for themselves what they found in the city of Ā′ī.

Then they marched on over the mountains, until they came near to the city of Shē′chem, in the middle of the land of Cā′năan. The people of the land were so filled with fear that none of them resisted the march of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Near Shē′chem are the two mountains, Ē′bal on the north, and Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm on the south. Between these is a great hollow place, like a vast bowl. There Jŏsh′u-ȧ gathered all the people of Ĭş′ra-el, with their wives and their children.

In the midst of this place they built an altar of unhewn stones heaped up, for they had left the Tabernacle and the brazen altar standing in the camp at Ḡĭl′găl, by Jôr′dan. On this new altar they gave offerings to the Lord and worshipped.

Then before all the people Jŏsh′u-ȧ read the law which Mō′şeş had written. And all the people, with their wives, and even the little children, listened to the law of the Lord. Half of the tribes stood on the slope of Mount Ē′bal on the north, and these, as Jŏsh′u-ȧ read the words of warning which God had given to those who should disobey, all answered with one voice "Amen." And the other half of the tribes stood on the slope of Mount Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm on the south; and as Jŏsh′u-ȧ read God's words of blessing to those who should obey the law, these answered "Amen."

JĔR′Ĭ-CHŌ AS IT NOW IS.

When they had done all this, and thus given the land to the Lord and pledged themselves to serve God, they marched again down the mountains, past the smouldering ruins of Ā′ī, past the heap of stones that covered Ā′chăn, and past the broken walls of Jĕr′ĭ-chō, back to the camp at Ḡĭl′găl beside the river.

Story Four

HOW JOSHUA CONQUERED THE LAND OF CANAAN

Joshua ix : 1, to xi : 23.

THE news of all that Jŏsh′u-ȧ and the men of Ĭş′ra-el had done at Jĕr′ĭ-chō and at Ā′ī, how they had destroyed those cities and slain their people, went through all the land. Everywhere the tribes of Cā′năan prepared to fight these strangers who had so suddenly and so boldly entered their country.

Near the middle of the mountain region, between Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm and Shē′chem, were four cities of a race called either the Hī′vītes, or the Ḡĭb′e-on-ītes, from their chief city, Ḡĭb′e-on. These people felt that they could not resist the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes; so they undertook to make peace with them. Their cities were less than a day's journey from the camp at Ḡĭl′găl, and quite near to Ā′ī; but they came to Jŏsh′u-ȧ at the camp, looking as if they had made a long journey.

They were wearing old and ragged garments, and shoes worn out; and they brought dry and mouldy bread, and old bags of food, and wine-skins torn and mended. They met Jŏsh′u-ȧ and the elders of Ĭş′ra-el in the camp, and said to them:

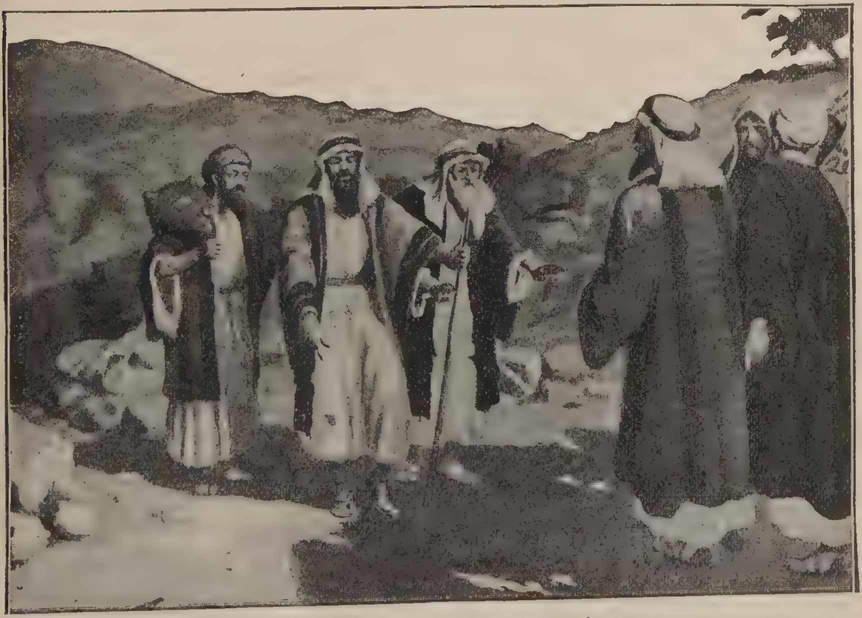
"We live in a country far away; but we have heard of the great things that you have done; the journey you have made, and the cities you have taken on the other side of the river Jôr′dan; and now we have come to offer you our friendship and to make peace with you." And Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to them, "Who are you? And from what land do you come?"

"We have come," they said, "from a country far away. See this bread. We took it hot from the oven, and now it is mouldy. These wine-skins were new when we filled them, and you see they are old. Look at our garments and our shoes, all worn out and patched."

Jŏsh′u-ȧ and the elders did not ask the Lord what to do, but made an agreement with these men to have peace with them, not to destroy their cities, and to spare the lives of their people. And a very few days after making peace with them they found that the four cities where they lived were very near.

At first the Ĭş′ra-el-īte rulers were very angry, and were inclined to break their agreement, but afterward they said:

"We will keep our promise to these people, though they have deceived us. We will let them live, but they shall be made our servants, and shall do the hard work for the camp and for the Tabernacle."



THE ḠĬB′E-ON-ĪTES COME TO JŎSH′U Ȧ.

Even this was better than to be killed, and to have their cities destroyed; and the Ḡĭb′e-on-īte people were glad to save their lives. So from that time the people of the four Ḡĭb′e-on-īte cities carried burdens, and drew water, and cut wood, and served the camp of Ĭş′ra-el.

The largest city near to the camp at Ḡĭl′găl was Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, among the mountains, where its king, Mĕl-chĭz′e-dĕk, in the days of Ā′bră-hăm, five hundred years before, had been a priest of the Lord, and had blessed Ā′bră-hăm. But now, in the days of Jŏsh′u-ȧ, the people of that city worshipped idols and were very wicked.

When the king of Jė-rṳ sȧ-lĕm heard that the Ḡĭb′e-on-ītes, who lived near him, had made peace with Ĭṣ′ra-el, he sent to the kings of Hē′bron and Lā′chish and several other cities, and said to them:

"Come, let us unite our armies into one great army and fight the Ḡīb′e-on-ītes and destroy them; for they have made peace with our enemies, the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el."

As soon as the people of Ḡĭb′e-on heard this they sent to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, saying:

"Come quickly and help us; for we are your servants; and the king of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm is coming with a great army to kill us all, and destroy our cities. The whole country is in arms against us; come at once, before it is too late!"

Jŏsh′u-ȧ was a very prompt man, swift in all his acts. At once he called out his army, and marched all night up the mountains. He came suddenly upon the five kings and their army at a place called Bĕth-hō′rŏn. There a great battle was fought, Jŏsh′u-ȧ leading his men against the Cā′năan-ītes. He did not give his enemies time to form in line, but fell upon them so suddenly that they were driven into confusion, and fled before the men of Ĭṣ′ra-el.

And the Lord helped his people by a storm which drove great hailstones down on the Cā′năan-ītes; so that more were killed by the hailstones than by the sword. It is written in an old song that on that day Jŏsh′u-ȧ said before all his men:

"Sun, stand thou still over Ḡĭb′e-on,
And thou, moon, in the valley of Ăj′a-lŏn,
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the people had taken vengeance upon their enemies."

If ever in all the history of the world there was a battle when the sun might well stand still, and the day be made longer, to make the victory complete, it was that day more than any other. For on that day the land was won by the people of the Lord. If Ĭṣ′ra-el had been defeated and destroyed, instead of Cā′năan, then the Bible would never have been written, the worship of the true God would have been blotted out, and the whole world would have

STEPHENS COLLEGE COLUMBIA, MO

worshipped idols. The battle that day was for the salvation of the world as well as of Ĭş'ra-el. So this was the greatest battle in its results that the world has ever seen. There have been many battles where more men fought, and more soldiers were slain, than at the battle of Bĕth-hō'rŏn. But no battle in all the world had such an effect in the years and the ages after, as this battle.

After the victory Jŏsh'u-ȧ followed his enemies as they fled, and killed many of them, until their armies were broken up and destroyed. The five kings who had led against Jŏsh'u-ȧ were found hidden in a cave, were brought out and were slain, so that they might no more trouble the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes. By this one victory all the part of the land of Cā'năan on the south was won, though there were a few small fights afterward.

Then Jŏsh'u-ȧ turned to the north, and led his army by a swift march against the kings who had united there to fight the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes. As suddenly as before he had fallen on the five kings at Bĕth-hō'rŏn, he fell upon these kings and their army, near the little lake in the far north of Cā'năan, called "the waters of Mē'rom." There another great victory was won; and after this it was easy to conquer the land. Everywhere the tribes of Cā'năan were made to submit to the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes, until all the mountain country was under Jŏsh'u-ȧ's rule.

In the conquest of Cā'năan, there were six great marches and six battles; three in the lands on the east of the Jôr'dan, while Mō'şeş was still living, the victories over the Ăm'ôr-ītes, the Mĭd'ĭ-an-ītes, and the people of Bā'shăn, on the northeast, and there on the west of Jôr'dan, the victories at Jĕr'ĭ-chō, at Bĕth-hō'rŏn, and Lake Mē'rom, under Jŏsh'u-ȧ.

But even after these marchings and victories, it was a long time before all the land was taken by the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes.

Story Five

THE OLD MAN WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE GIANTS

Joshua xiv : 1, to xix : 51.

THE great war for the conquest of Cā′năan was now ended, though in the land some cities were still held by the Cā′năan-īte people. Yet the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were now the rulers over most of the country, and Jŏsh′u-ȧ prepared to divide the land among the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el.

One day the rulers of the tribe of Jū′dah came to Jŏsh′u-ȧ's tent at Ḡĭl′găl, and with them came an old man, Cā′leb, whom you remember as one of the twelve spies sent by Mō′şeş from Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ to go through the land of Cā′năan. This had been many years before, and Cā′leb was now, like Jŏsh′u-ȧ, an old man, past eighty years of age. He said to Jŏsh′u-ȧ:

"You remember what the Lord said to Mō′şeş, the man of God, when we were in the desert at Kā′desh=bär′ne-ȧ, and you and I with the other spies brought back our report. I spoke to Mō′şeş the word that was in my heart, and I followed the Lord wholly, when the other spies spoke out of their own fear, and made the people afraid. On that day, you remember that Mō′şeş said to me, 'The land where your feet have trodden and over which you have walked shall be yours, because you trusted in the Lord.'

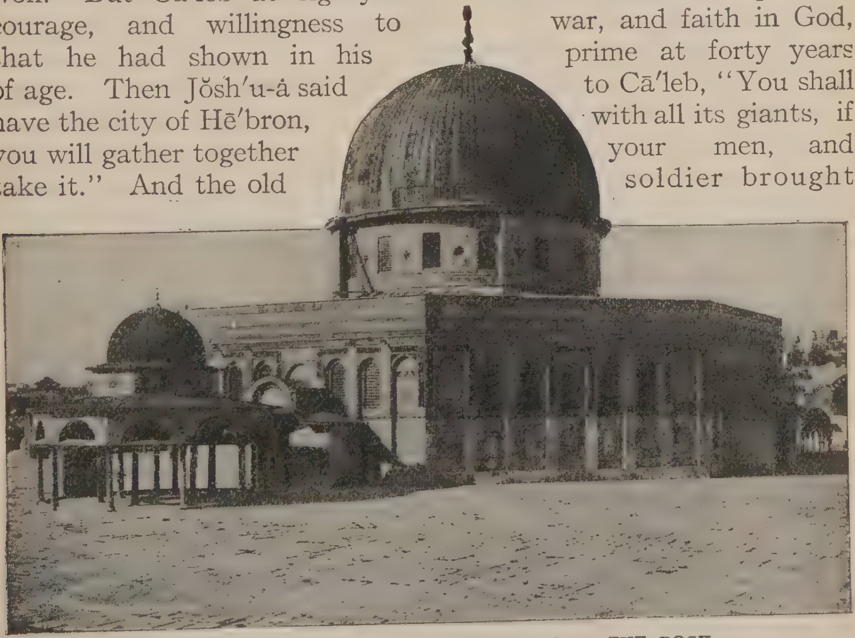
"That was forty-five years ago," Cā′leb went on to say, "and God has kept me alive all those years. To-day, at eighty-five years of age, I am as strong as I was in that day. And now I ask that the promise made by Mō′şeş be kept, and that I have my choice of the places in the land."

"Well," said Jŏsh′u-ȧ, "you can take your choice in the land. What part of it will you choose?"

And Cā′leb answered:

"The place that I will choose is the very mountian on which we saw the city with the high walls, where the giants were living then, and where other giants, their sons, are living now, the city of Hē′bron. I know that the walls are high, and the giants live there. But the Lord will help me to take the cities, and to drive out the people who live in them. Let me have the city of Hē′bron."

This was very bold in so old a man as Cā′leb, to choose the city which was not yet taken from the enemies, and one of the hardest cities to take, when he might have chosen some rich place already won. But Cā′leb at eighty-five showed the same spirit of courage, and willingness to war, and faith in God, that he had shown in his prime at forty years of age. Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ said to Cā′leb, "You shall have the city of Hē′bron, with all its giants, if you will gather together your men, and take it." And the old soldier brought together his men, and led them against the strong city of Hē′bron, where was the tomb of Ā′bră-hăm, Ī′ṣaac, and Jā′cob. By the help of the Lord, Cā′leb was able to drive out the giants, tall and mighty as they were. They fled from Cā′leb's men and went down to the shore on the west of the land, and lived among the people of that region, who were called the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneṣ; while Cā′leb, and his children, and his descendants long after him, held the city of Hē′bron in the south of the land.



THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, OR THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

After this, by command of the Lord, Jŏsh′u-ȧ divided the land among the tribes. Two tribes and half of another tribe had already received their land on the east of Jôr′dan; so there were nine tribes and a half tribe to receive their shares. Jū′dah, one of the largest, had the mountain country west of the Dead Sea, from Hē′bron to Jē-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm; Sĭm′e-on was on the south toward the desert; Bĕn′ja-mĭn was north of Jū′dah on the east, toward the Jôr′dan, and Dăn north of Jū′dah on the west, toward the Great Sea.

In the middle of the country, around the city of Shē′chem, and the two mountains, Ē′bal and Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm, where Jŏsh′u-ȧ had read the law to the people, was the land of the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm. This was one of the best parts of all the country, for the soil was rich and there were many springs and streams of water. And here, near Mount Ē′bal, they buried the body of their tribe-father Jō′ṣeph, which they had kept in its coffin of stone, unburied, ever since they left Ē′ġy̆pt, more than forty years before. As Jŏsh′u-ȧ himself belonged to the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, his home was also in this land.

North of Ē′phră-ĭm, and reaching from the river Jôr′dan to the Great Sea, was the land of the other half of the tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh. Both tribes of Ē′phră-ĭm and Mȧ-năs′seh had sprung from Jō′ṣeph. So Jō′ṣeph's descendants had two tribes, as had been promised by Jā′cob when he was about to die.

The northern part of the land was divided among four tribes. Ĭs′sa-cher was in the south, Ăsh′ẽr on the west beside the Great Sea, Zĕb′u-lŭn was in the middle among the mountains, and Năph′ta-lī was in the north, and by the lake afterward called the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee. At that time this lake was called the Sea of Kĭn′no-rĕth, because the word "kinnor" means "a harp"; and as they thought that this lake was shaped somewhat like a harp, they named it "the Harp-shaped Sea."

But although all the land had been divided, it had not all been completely conquered. Nearly all the Cā′năan-īte people were there, still living upon the land, though in the mountain region they were under the rule of the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes. But on the plain beside the Great Sea, on the west of the land were the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneṣ, a very strong people whom the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes had not yet met in war, though the time was coming when they would meet them, and suffer from them.

And even among the mountains were many cities where the Cā′năan-īte people still lived, and in some of these cities they were strong. Years afterward, when Jŏsh′u-ȧ the great warrior was no longer living, many of these people rose up to trouble the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. The time came when the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el wished often that their fathers had driven out or entirely destroyed the Cā′năan-ītes, before they ceased the war and divided the land.

But when Jŏsh′u-ȧ divided the land, and sent the tribes to their new homes, peace seemed to reign over all the country. Up to this time we have spoken of all this land as the land of Cā′năan, but now and henceforth it was to be called "The Land of Ĭş′ra-el," or "The Land of the Twelve Tribes," for it was now their home.

Story Six

THE AVENGER OF BLOOD, AND THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Joshua xx : 1, to xxi : 45

THERE was among the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes one custom which seems so strange, and so different from our ways, that it will be interesting to hear about it. It was their rule with regard to any man who by accident killed another man. With us, whenever a man has been killed, the man who killed him, if he can be found, is taken by an officer before the judge, and he is tried. If he killed the man by accident, not wishing to do harm, he is set free. If he meant to kill him he is punished; he may be sentenced to die for the other man's death; and when he is put to death it is by the officer of the law.

But in the lands of the east, where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes lived, it was very different. There, when a man was killed, his nearest relative always took it upon himself to kill the man who had killed him; and he undertook to kill this man without trial, without a judge, and by his own hand, whether the man deserved to die, or did not deserve it. Two men might be working in the forest together, and one man's axe might fly from his hand and kill the other; or one man hunting might kill another hunter by mistake. No matter whether the man was guilty or innocent, the nearest relative of the one who had lost his life must find the man who had killed him, and kill him in return, wherever he was. If he could not find him, sometimes he would kill any member of his family whom he could find. This man was called "the avenger of blood," because he took vengeance for the blood of his relative, whether the one whom he slew deserved to die or not. When Mō'şeş gave laws to the children of Ĭş'ra-el he found this custom of having an "avenger of blood" rooted so deeply in the habits of the people that it could not be broken up. In fact, it still remains, even to this day, among the village people in the land where the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes lived.

But Mō'şeş gave a law which was to take the place of the old custom, and to teach the people greater justice in their dealings with each other. And when they came into the land of Cā'năan, Jŏsh'u-ȧ carried out the plan which Mō'şeş had commanded.

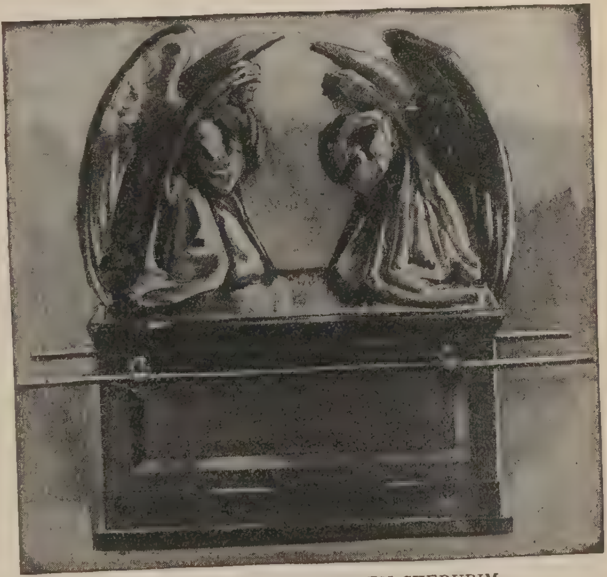
Jŏsh'u-ȧ chose in the land six cities, three on one side of the river Jôr'dan, and three on the other side. All of these were well-known places and easy to find. Most of them were on mountains, and could be seen far away. They were so chosen that from almost any part of the land a man could reach one of these cities in a day, or at the most in two days. These cities were called "Cities of Refuge," because in them a man who had killed another by mistake could find refuge from the avenger of blood.

When a man killed another by accident, wherever he was, he ran as quickly as possible to the nearest of these cities of refuge. The avenger of blood followed him, and might perhaps overtake him and kill him before he reached the city. But almost always the man, having some start before his enemy, would get to the city of refuge first.

There the elders of the city looked into the case. They learned all the facts; and if the man was really guilty, and deserved to die, they gave him up to be killed by the avenger. But if he was innocent, and did not mean to kill the man who was dead, they forbade the avenger to touch him, and kept him in safety.

A line was drawn around the city, at a distance from the wall, within which line the avenger could not come to do the man harm; and within this line were fields, where the man could work and raise crops, so that he could have food.

And there at the city of refuge the innocent man who had killed another without meaning to kill, lived until the high-priset died. After the high-priest died, and another high-priest took his place, the man could go back to his own home and live in peace.



THE ARK WITH THE GOLDEN CHERUBIM.

These were the cities of refuge in the land of Ĭş′ra-el: On the north, Kē′desh in the tribe of Năph′ta-lī; in the center, Shē′chem, at the foot of Mount Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm, in the tribe of Ē′phra-ĭm; and on the south, Hē′bron, Cā′leb's city, in the tribe of Jū′dah. These were among the mountains, on the west of the river Jôr′dan. On the east of the river Jôr′dan, the cities were Gō′lan of Bā′shăn in Mȧ-năs′seh, Rā′moth of Ḡĭl′e-ăd in the tribe of Găd, and Bē′zẽr in the highlands of the tribe of Reụ′ben.

This law taught the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to be patient, and to control themselves, to protect the innocent, and to seek for justice, and not yield to sudden anger.

Among the tribes there was one which had no land given to it in one place. This was the tribe of Lē′vī, to which Mō′şeş and Aâr′on belonged. The men of this tribe were priests, who offered the sacrifices, and Lē′vītes, who cared for the Tabernacle and its worship. Mō′ṣeṣ and Jŏsh′u-ȧ did not think it well to have all the Lē′vītes living in one part of the country, so he gave them cities, and in some places the fields around the cities, in many parts of the land. From these places they went up to the Tabernacle to serve, each for a certain part of the year; and the rest of the year stayed in their homes and cared for their fields.

When the war was over, and the land was divided, Jŏsh′u-ȧ fixed the Tabernacle at a place called Shī′lōh, not far from the center of the land, so that from all the tribes the people could come up at least once a year for worship. They were told to come from their homes three times in each year, and to worship the Lord at Shī′lōh.

These three times were for the feast of the Passover in the spring, when the lamb was killed, and roasted, and eaten with unleavened bread; the feast of the Tabernacles in the fall, when for a week they slept out of doors in huts made of twigs and boughs, to keep in mind their life in the wilderness; and the feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover, when they laid on the altar the first ripe fruits from the fields. All these three great feasts were kept at the place of the altar and the Tabernacle.

And at Shī′lōh, before the Tabernacle, they placed the altar, on which the offerings were laid twice every day.

God had kept his promise, and had brought the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes into a land which was their own, and had given them rest from all their enemies.

Story Seven

THE STORY OF AN ALTAR BESIDE THE RIVER

Joshua xxii : 1, to xxiv : 33.

WHEN the war for the conquest of Cā′năan was ended, and the tribes were about to leave for their places in the land, Jŏsh′u-ȧ broke up the camp at Ḡĭl′găl, which had been the meeting-place of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes through all the war.

You remember that two of the tribes and half of another tribe had received their land on the east of Jôr′dan, but their soldiers crossed the Jôr′dan with the men of the other tribes. Jŏsh′u-ȧ now called these soldiers, and said to them:

"You have done all that Mō′şeş the servant of the Lord commanded you; you have stood faithfully by your brothers of the other tribes; and now the time has come for you to go back to your wives and your children in your own tribe-lands on the other side of Jôr′dan. Go to your homes, where your wives and children are waiting for you. Only remember always to keep the commandments of the Lord, and be true to the Lord, and serve him with all your heart and all your soul."

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ gave them the blessing of the Lord, and sent them away. They left Shī′lōh, where the Tabernacle was standing, and came to the river Jôr′dan. There on a great rock where it could be seen from far, they built a high altar of stone.

Soon it was told among the tribes that the men of the two tribes and a half-tribe had built for themselves an altar. God had commanded the people to have but one altar for all the tribes, and one high-priest, and one offering for all the tribes upon the altar. This was for the purpose of keeping all the people together, as one family, with one worship.

The people of Ĭş′ra-el were greatly displeased when they found that these tribes had built an altar, while there was already one altar for all the tribes at Shī′lōh. They were almost ready to go to war against the tribes on the east of the Jôr′dan on account of this altar.

But before going to war they sent one of the priests, Phĭn′e-has, the son of Ē-le-ā′zar, and with him ten of the princes of Ĭş′ra-el, one from each tribe, to ask the men of the tribes on the east for what purpose they had built this altar. These men came to the men of Reu̥′ben and Găd, and the half-tribe of Må-năs′seh, and said to them:

"What is this that you have done in building for yourselves an altar? Do you mean to turn away from the Lord and set up your own gods? Have you forgotten how God was made angry when Ĭş′ra-el worshipped other gods? Do not show yourselves rebels against God by building an altar while God's altar is standing at Shī′lōh."

Then the men of the two tribes and a half answered:

"The Lord, the only God, he knows that we have not built this altar for the offering of sacrifices. Let the Lord himself be our judge, that we have done no wrong. We have built this altar so that our children may see it, standing as it stands on your side of the river and not on our side: and then we can say to them, 'Let that altar remind you that we are all one people, we and the tribes on the other side of Jôr′dan.' This altar stands as a witness between us that we are all one people and worship the one Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el."

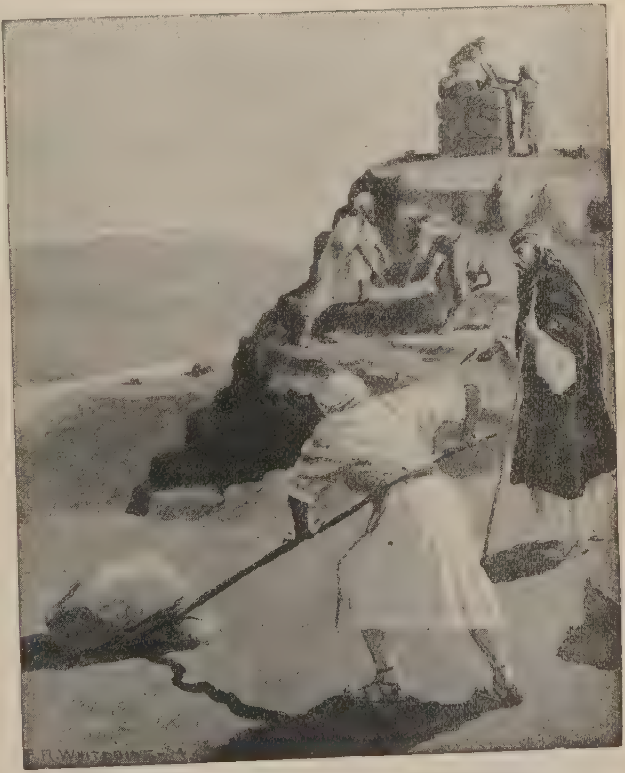
Then the princes of the nine tribes and a half were satisfied. They were pleased when they knew that it was an altar for witness and not for offerings. They named the altar Ed, a word which means witness. "For," they said, "it is a witness between us that the Lord is our God, the God of us all."

Jŏsh′u-å was now a very old man, more than a hundred years old. He knew that he must soon die, and he wished to give to the people his last words. So he called the elders and rulers and judges of the tribes to meet him at Shē′chem, in the middle of the land and near his own home.

When they were all together before him, Jŏsh′u-å reminded them of all that God had done for their fathers and for themselves. He told them the story of Ā′bră-hăm, how he left his home at God's call; the story of Jā′cob and his family going down to

Ē′ġўpt; and how after many years the Lord had brought them out of that land; how the Lord had led them through the wilderness and had given them the land where they were now living at peace. Jŏsh′u-ȧ then said:

"You are living in cities that you did not build, and you are eating of vines and olive-trees that you did not plant. It is the Lord who has given you all these things. Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him with all your hearts. And if any of you have any other gods, such as Ā′bră-hăm's father worshipped beyond the River, and as your fathers sometimes worshipped in Ē′ġўpt, put them away, and serve the Lord only. And if you are not willing to serve the Lord, then choose this day whatever god you will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."



THE ALTAR WHICH STOOD AS A WITNESS.

Then the people answered Jŏsh′u-ȧ:

"We will not turn away from the Lord to serve other gods; for the Lord brought us out of Ē′ġўpt where we were slaves; and the Lord drove out our enemies before us; and the Lord gave us this land. We will serve the Lord, for he is the God of Ĭş′ra-el."

"But," said Jŏsh′u-ȧ, "you must remember that the Lord is very strict in his commands. He will be angry with you if you turn away from him after promising to serve him; and will punish you if you worship images, as the people do around you."

And the people said, "We pledge ourselves to serve the Lord, and the Lord only."

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ wrote down the people's promise in the book of the law, so that others might read it and remember it. And he set up a great stone under an oak-tree in Shē′chem, and he said:

"Let this stone stand as a witness between you and the Lord, that you have pledged yourselves to be faithful to him."

Then Jŏsh′u-ȧ sent the people away to their tribe-lands, telling them not to forget the promise that they had made. After this Jŏsh′u-ȧ died, at the age of a hundred and ten years. And as long as the people lived who remembered Jŏsh′u-ȧ, the people of Ĭş′ra-el continued serving the Lord.

Story Eight

THE PRESENT THAT EHUD BROUGHT TO KING EGLON

Judges i : 1, to iii : 31.

YOU would suppose that, after all that God had done for the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, and after their own promises to serve him faithfully, they would never turn to the idols which could not save their own people, the Cā′năan-ītes. Yet, when Jŏsh′u-ȧ was no longer living, and the men who knew Jŏsh′u-a had also died, the people began to forget their own God and to worship images of wood and stone.

Perhaps it was not so strange after all. In all the world, so far as we know, at that time the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were the only people who did not worship idols. All the nations around them, the Ē̇′ġy̌p′tianş, from whose land they had come, the Ē′dom-ītes on the south, the Mō′ab-ītes on the east, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş on the west beside the Great Sea,—all these bowed down to images, and many of them offered their own children upon the idol-altars.

Then, too, you remember that the Cā′năan-ītes had not been driven out of the land. They were there still, in their own cities and villages everywhere, and their idols were standing under the trees on many high places. So the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes saw idols all around them, and people bowing down before them; while they themselves had no God that could be seen. The Tabernacle was far away from some parts of the land; and the people were so busy with their fields and their houses that few of them went up to worship.

And so it came to pass that the people began to neglect their own worship of the Lord, and then to begin the worship of the idols around them. And from idol-worship they sank lower still into wicked deeds. For all this the Lord left them to suffer. Their enemies came upon them from the lands around, and became their masters; for when God left them they were helpless. They were made poor, for these rulers who had conquered them robbed them of all their grain, and grapes, and olive-oil.

After a time of suffering the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes would think of what God had done for them in other times. Then they would turn away from the idols, and would call upon God. And God would hear them, and raise up some great man to lead them to freedom, and to break the power of those who were ruling over them. This great man they called "a judge"; and under him they would serve God, and be happy and successful once more.

As long as the judge lived and ruled, the people worshipped God. But when the judge died they forgot God again, and worshipped idols and fell under the power of their enemies as before, until God sent another judge to deliver them. And this happened over and over again in the three hundred years after Jŏsh′u-ȧ died. Seven nations in turn ruled over the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, and after each "oppression," as this rule was called, a "deliverer" arose to set the people free.

The idols which the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes worshipped most of all were those named Bā′al and Ăsh-ē′rah. Bā′al was an image looking somewhat like a man; and Ăsh-ē'rah was the name given to the one that looked like a woman. These images were set up in groves and on hills by the Cā'năan-īte people, and to these the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes bowed down, falling on their faces before them.

The first nation to come from another land against the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes was the people of Mĕs-o-pṑ-tā'mĭ-ȧ, between the great rivers Eū-phrā'teş and Tī'gris on the north. Their king led his army into the land and made the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes serve him eight years. Then they cried to the Lord, and the Lord sent to them Ŏth'nĭ-el, who was a younger brother of Cā'leb, of whom we read in Story Five in this Part. He set the people free from the Mĕs-o-pṑ-tā'mĭ-ȧns, and ruled them as long as he lived, and kept them faithful to the Lord. Ŏth'nĭ-el was the first of the judges of Ĭş'ra-el.

But after Ŏth'nĭ-el died the people again began to worship images, and again fell under the power of their enemies. This time it was the Mō'ab-ītes who came against them from the land east of the Dead Sea. Their king at this time was named Eg'lŏn, and he was very hard in his rule over the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes. Again they cried to the Lord, and God called a man named Ē'hŭd, who belonged to the tribe of Bĕn'ja-mĭn, to set the people free.

Ē'hŭd came one day to visit King Eg'lŏn, who was ruling over the land. He said:

"I have a present from my people to the king. Let me go into his palace and see him."

They let Ē'hŭd into the palace, and he gave to the king a present; then he went out, but soon came back, and said:

"I have a message to the king that no one else can hear. Let me see the king alone."

As he had just brought a present they supposed that he was a friend to the king. Then, too, he had no sword on the side where men carried their swords. But Ē'hŭd was left-handed, and he carried on the other side a short, sharp sword which he had made, like a dagger. This sword was out of sight under his garment.

He went into the room where King Eg'lŏn was sitting alone, and said, "I have a message from the Lord to you, and this is the message."

And then he drew out his sword and drove it up to the handle into the king's body so suddenly that the king died without giving a sound. Ē'hŭd left the sword in the dead body of the king, and went out quietly by the rear door. The servants of the king thought he was asleep in his room, and for a while did not go in to see why he was so still; but when they found him dead Ē'hŭd was far away.

Ē'hŭd blew a trumpet and called his people together, and led them against the Mō'ab-ītes. They were so helpless without their king that Ē'hŭd and his men easily drove them out of Ĭş'ra-el and set the people free. Ē'hŭd became the second judge over the land. And after that it was many years before enemies again held rule over Ĭş'ra-el.

The next enemies to Ĭş'ra-el were the Phĭ-lĭs'tĭneş, who lived on the shore of the Great Sea on the west. They came up from the plain against the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes; but Shăm'gär, the third judge, met them with a company of farmers, who drove the Phĭ-lĭs'tĭneş back with their ox-goads, and so kept them from ruling over the land.

Story Nine

HOW A WOMAN WON A GREAT VICTORY

Judges iv : 1, to v : 31.

AGAIN many of the people of Ĭş'ra-el were drawn away from the worship of the Lord, and began to live like the people around them, praying to idols and doing wickedly. And again the Lord left them to suffer for their sins. A Cā'năan-īte king in the north, whose name was Jā'bin, sent his army down to conquer them under the command of his general, named Sĭs'e-rȧ. In Sĭs'e-rȧ's army were many chariots of iron, drawn by horses; while soldiers in the chariots shot arrows and threw spears at the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes. The men of Ĭş′ra-el were not used to horses, and greatly feared these war-chariots.

All the northern tribes in the land of Ĭş′ra-el fell under the power of King Jā′bin and his general, Sĭs′e-rȧ; and their rule was very harsh and severe. This was the fourth of these "oppressions," and it bore most heavily upon the people in the north. But it led those who suffered from it to turn from their idols, and to call upon the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el.

At that time a woman was ruling as judge over a large part of the land; the only woman among the fifteen judges who, one after another, ruled the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Her name was Dĕb′o-rah. She sat under a palm-tree north of Jê-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, between the cities of Rā′mah and Bĕth′=el, and gave advice to all the people who sought her. So wise and good was Dĕb′o-rah that men came from all parts of the land with their difficulties and the questions that arose between them. She ruled over the land, not by the force of any army, or by any appointment, but because all men saw that God's spirit was upon her.

Dĕb′o-rah heard of the troubles of the tribes in the north under the hard rule of the Cā′năan-ītes. She knew that a brave man was living in the land of Năph′ta-lī, a man named Bā′răk, and to him she sent this message:

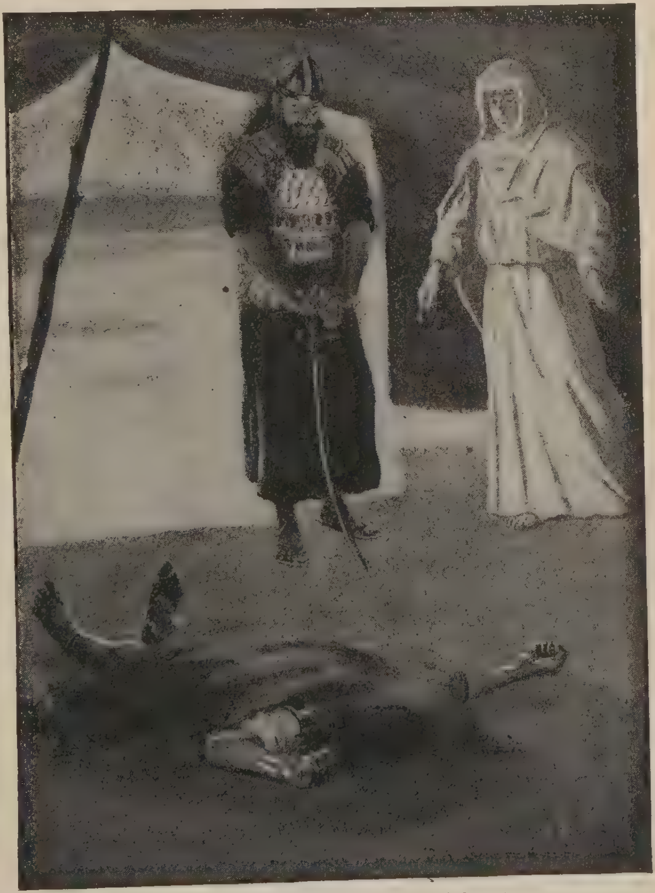
"Bā′răk, call out the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el who live near you; raise an army, and lead the men who gather about you to Mount Tā′bôr. The Lord has told me that he will give Sĭs′e-rȧ and the host of the Cā′năan-ītes into your hands."

But Bā′răk felt afraid to undertake alone this great work of setting his people free. He sent back to Dĕb′o-rah this answer:

"If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go."

"I will go with you," said Dĕb′o-rah; "but because you did not trust God, and did not go when God called you, the honor of this war will not be yours, for God will deliver Sĭs′e-rȧ into the hands of a woman."

Dĕb′o-rah left her seat under the palm-tree and went up to Kē′desh, where Bā′răk lived. Together Dĕb′o-rah and Bā′răk sent out a call for the men of the north, and ten thousand men met together with such arms as they could find. This little army, with a woman for its chief, encamped on Mount Tā′bôr, which is one of three mountains standing in a row on the east of a great plain called "the plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon," "the plain of Jĕz′re-el," and "the plain of Mė-gĭd′dȯ,"—for it bears all these three names. On this plain, both in Bible times and also in the times since the Bible, many great battles have been fought. Over this plain winds the brook Kī′shŏn, which at some seasons, after heavy rain, becomes a foaming, rushing river.



BĀ′RĂK SEES THE MIGHTY SĬS′E-RȦ.

From their camp on the top of Mount Tā′bôr the little army of Ĭş′ra-el could look down on the great host of Cā′năan-ītes with their many tents, their horses and chariots, and their general, Sĭs′e-rȧ. But Dĕb′o-rah was not afraid. She said to Bā′răk:

"March down the mountain with all your men, and fight the Cā′năan-ītes. The Lord will go before you, and he will give Sĭs′e-rȧ and his host into your hand."

Then Bā′răk blew a trumpet and called out his men. They ran down the side of Mount Tā′bôr and rushed upon their enemies.

The Cā′năan-ītes were taken so suddenly that they had no time to draw out their chariots. They were frightened and ran away, trampling each other under foot, chariots and horses and men in a wild flight.

And the Lord helped the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes; for at that time the brook Kī′shŏn was swollen into a river, and the Cā′năan-ītes crowded after each other into it. While many were killed in the battle, many were also drowned in the river.

Sĭs′e-rȧ, the general of the Cā′năan-ītes, saw that the battle had gone against him and that all was lost. He leaped from his chariot and fled away on foot. On the edge of the plain he found a tent standing alone, and he ran to it for shelter and hiding.

It was the tent of a man named Hē′bẽr, and Hē′bẽr's wife, Jā′el, was in front of it. She knew Sĭs′e-rȧ, and said to him, "Come in, my lord; come into the tent; do not be afraid."

Sĭs′e-rȧ entered the tent, and Jā′el covered him with a rug, so that no enemy might find him. Sĭs′e-rȧ said to her, "I am very thirsty; can you give me a little water to drink?"

Instead of water she brought out a bottle of milk and gave him some: and then Sĭs′e-rȧ lay down to sleep, for he was very tired from the battle and from running. While he was in a deep sleep, Jā′el crept into the tent quietly with a tent-pin and a hammer in her hand. She placed the point of the pin upon the side of his head, near his ear, and with the hammer gave blow after blow, driving it into his brain and through his head until it went into the ground underneath. After a moment's struggle Sĭs′e-rȧ was dead, and she left his body upon the ground.

In a little time Jā′el saw Bā′răk, the chief of the Ĭş′ra-el-īte army, coming toward the tent. She went out to meet him, and said, "Come with me, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking."

She lifted the curtain of the tent, and led Bā′răk within; and there he saw lying dead upon the ground the mighty Sĭs′e-rȧ, who only the day before had led the army of the Cā′năan-ītes.

That was a terrible deed which Jā′el did. We should call it treachery and murder; but such was the bitter hate between Ĭş′ra-el-īte and Cā′năan-īte at that time that all the people gave great honor to Jā′el on account of it, for by that act she had set the people free from the king who had been oppressing Ĭş′ra-el. After this the land had rest for many years.

Dĕb′o-rah, the judge, wrote a great song about this victory. Here are some verses from it:

"Because the elders took the lead in Iş′ra-el,
Because the people offered themselves willingly,
Bless ye the Lord.

Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
I, even I will sing unto the Lord;
I will sing praise to the Lord, the God of Iş′ra-el.

* * * * * * * * * *

The kings came and fought.
Then fought the kings of Cā′năan,
In Tā′a-năch by the waters of Mĕ-gĭd′dȯ
They took no gain of money.

They fought from heaven,
The stars in their courses fought against Sĭs′e-rȧ.
The river Kī′shŏn swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kī′shŏn.
O my soul, march on with strength;

* * * * * * * * * *

Blessed among women shall Jā′el be,
The wife of Hē′bẽr the Kĕn′īte,
Blessed shall she be among women in the tent.
He asked water, and she gave him milk,
She brought him butter in a lordly dish.

* * * * * * * * * *

At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay;
At her feet he bowed, he fell.
Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

Through the window a woman looked forth and cried,
The mother of Sĭs′e-rȧ cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?

* * * * * * * * * *

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord;
But let them that love him be as the sun,
When he goeth forth in his might."

Story Ten

GIDEON AND HIS BRAVE THREE HUNDRED

Judges vi : 1, to viii : 28.

AGAIN the people of Ĭş′ra-el did evil in the sight of the Lord in worshipping Bā′al; and the Lord left them again to suffer for their sins. This time it was the Mĭd′-ĭ-an-ītes, living near the desert on the east of Ĭş′ra-el, who came against the tribes in the middle of the country. The two tribes that suffered the hardest fate were Ē′phră-ĭm, and the part of Mȧ-năs′seh on the west of Jôr′dan. For seven years the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes swept over their land every year, just at the time of harvest, and carried away all the crops of grain, until the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had no food for themselves and none for their sheep and cattle. The Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes brought also their own flocks, and camels without number, which ate all the grass of the field. These Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes were the wild Arabs, living on the border of the desert, and from their land they made sudden and swift attacks upon the people of Ĭş′ra-el.

The people of Ĭş′ra-el were driven away from their villages and their farms; and were compelled to hide in the caves of the mountains. And if any Ĭş′ra-el-īte could raise any grain, he buried it in pits covered with earth, or in empty wine-presses, where the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes could not find it.

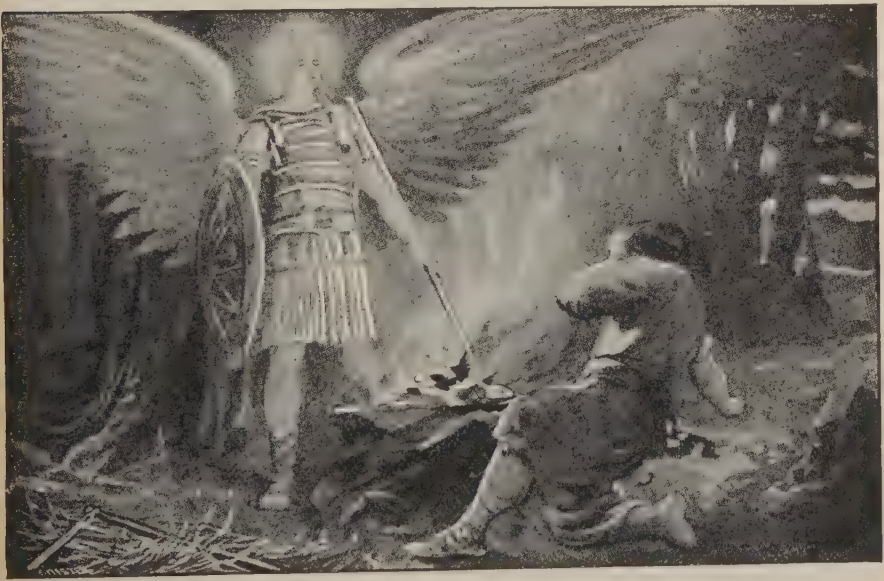
One day a man named Ḡĭd′e-on was threshing out wheat in a hidden place, when suddenly he saw an angel sitting under an oak-tree. The angel said to him, "You are a brave man, Ḡĭd′e-on; and the Lord is with you. Go out boldly, and save your people from the power of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes."

Ḡĭd′e-on answered the angel, "O Lord, how can I save Ĭş′ra-el? Mine is a poor family in Mȧ-năs′seh, and I am the least in my father's house."

And the Lord said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and I will help you drive out the Mĭd'ĭ-an-ītes."

Ḡĭd'e-on felt that it was the Lord who was talking with him in the form of an angel. He brought an offering, and laid it on a rock before the angel. Then the angel touched the offering with his staff. At once a fire leaped up and burned the offering; and then the angel vanished from his sight. Ḡĭd'e-on was afraid when he saw this; but the Lord said to him, "Peace be unto you, Ḡĭd'e-on; do not fear, for I am with you."

On the spot where the Lord appeared to Ḡĭd'e-on, under an oak-tree near the village of Ŏph'rah, in the tribe-land of Må-năs'seh, Ḡĭd'e-on built an altar, and called it by a name which means "The Lord is peace." This altar was standing long afterward in that place.



THE ANGEL TOUCHED ḠĬD'E-ON'S OFFERING.

Then the Lord told Ḡĭd'e-on that before setting his people free from the Mĭd'ĭ-an-ītes, he must first set them free from the service of Bā'al and Ăsh-ē'rah, the two idols most worshipped among them. Near the house of Ḡĭd'e-on's own father stood an altar to Bā'al, and the image of Ăsh-ē'rah.

On that night Ḡĭd'e-on went out with ten men, and threw down the image of Bā′al, and cut in pieces the wooden image of Ash-ē′rah, and destroyed the altar before these idols. And in place he built an altar to the God of Ĭş′ra-el, and on it laid the broken pieces of the idols for wood, and with them offered a young ox as a burnt-offering.

On the next morning, when the people of the village went out to worship their idols, they found them cut in pieces, the altar taken away; in its place stood an altar of the Lord, and on it the pieces of the Ăsh-ē′rah were burning as wood under a sacrifice to the Lord. The people looked at the broken and burning idols, and they said, "Who has done this?"

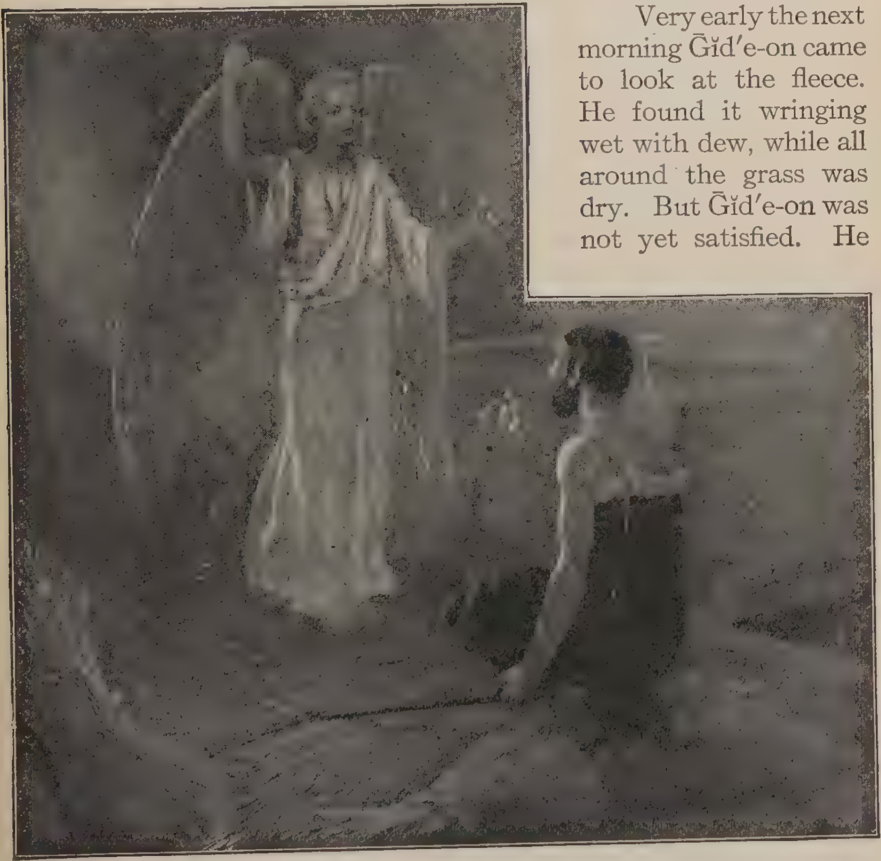
Some one said, "Ḡĭd′e-on, the son of Jō′ăsh, did this last night." Then they came to Jō′ăsh, Ḡĭd′e-on's father, and said, "We are going to kill your son because he has destroyed the image of Bā′al, who is our god."

And Jō′ăsh, Ḡĭd′e-on's father, said, "If Bā′al is a god, he can take care of himself; and he will punish the man who has destroyed his image. Why should you help Bā′al? Let Bā′al help himself."

And when they saw that Bā′al could not harm the man who had broken down his altar and his image, the people turned from Bā′al back to their own Lord God.

Ḡĭd′e-on sent men through all his own tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh and the other tribes in that part of the land, to say, "Come and help us drive out the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes." The men came, and gathered around Ḡĭd′e-on. Very few of them had swords and spears, for the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were not a fighting people, and were not trained for war. They met beside a great spring on Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ, called "the fountain of Hā′rod." Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ is one of the three mountains on the east of the plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon, or the plain of Jĕz′re-el, of which we read in the last Story. On the plain, stretching up the side of another of these mountains, called "the Hill of Mō′reh," was the camp of a vast Mĭd′ĭ-an-īte army. For as soon as the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes heard that Ḡĭd′e-on had undertaken to set his people free, they came against him with a mighty host. Just as Dĕb′o-rah and her little army had looked down from Mount Tā′bôr on the great army of the Cā′năan-ītes, so now, on Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ, Ḡĭd′e-on looked down on the host of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes in their camp on the same plain.

Ḡĭd′e-on was a man of faith. He wished to be sure that God was leading him; and he prayed to God, and said, "O Lord God, give me some sign that thou wilt save Ĭş'ra-el through me. Here is a fleece of wool on this threshing-floor. If to-morrow morning the fleece is wet with dew, while the grass around it is dry, then I shall know that thou art with me, and that thou wilt give me victory over the Mĭd'ĭ-an-ītes."


THE ANGEL SPEAKING TO ḠĬD'E-ON ON THE THRESHING-FLOOR.

Very early the next morning Ḡĭd'e-on came to look at the fleece. He found it wringing wet with dew, while all around the grass was dry. But Ḡĭd'e-on was not yet satisfied. He said to the Lord, "O Lord, be not angry with me; but give me just one more sign. To-morrow morning, let the fleece be dry, and let the dew fall all around it; and then I will doubt no more."

The next morning Ḡĭd'e-on found the grass and the bushes and the trees wet with dew, while the fleece of wool was dry. And

Gĭd′e-on was now sure that God had called him, and that God would give him victory over the enemies of Ĭş′ra-el.

The Lord said to Gĭd′e-on, "Your army is too large. If Ĭş′ra-el should win the victory, they would say, 'We won it by our own might.' Send home all those who are afraid to fight." For many of the people were frightened as they looked at the host of their enemies; and the Lord knew that these men in the battle would only hinder the rest.

So Gĭd′e-on sent word through the camp, "Whoever is afraid of the enemy may go home." And twenty-two thousand people went away, leaving only ten thousand in Gĭd′e-on's army. But the army was stronger though it was smaller, for the cowards had gone and only the brave men were left.

But the Lord said to Gĭd′e-on, "The people are yet too many. You need only a few of the bravest and best men to fight in this battle. Bring the men down the mountain, beside the water, and I will show you there how to find the men whom you need."

In the morning Gĭd′e-on by God's command called his ten thousand men out, and made them march down the hill, just as though they were going to attack the enemy. And when they were beside the water he noticed how they drank; and set them apart in two companies, according to their way of drinking. As they came to the water, most of the men threw aside their shields and spears, and knelt down and scooped up a draught of the water with both hands together like a cup. These men Gĭd′e-on commanded to stand in one company.

There were a few men who did not stop to take a large draught of water. Holding spear and shield in the right hand, to be ready for the enemy if one should suddenly appear, they merely caught up a handful of the water in passing and marched on, lapping up the water from one hand.

God said to Gĭd′e-on, "Set by themselves these men who lapped up each a handful of water. These are the men whom I have chosen to set Ĭş′ra-el free."

Gĭd′e-on counted these men, and found that there were only three hundred of them; while all the rest bowed down on their faces to drink. The difference between them was that these three hundred were earnest men, of one purpose; not turning aside from their aim even to drink, as the others did. Then, too, they were watchful men, always ready to meet their enemies. Suppose that the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes had rushed out on that army while nearly all of them were on their faces drinking, their arms thrown to one side,—how helpless they would have been! But no enemy could have surprised the three hundred, who held their spears and shields ready, even while they were taking a drink.

Some have thought that this test showed also who were worshippers of idols, and who worshipped God; for men fell on their faces when they prayed to the idols, but men stood up while they worshipped the Lord. Perhaps this act showed that most of the army were used to worship kneeling down before idols, and that only a few used to stand up before the Lord in their worship; but of this we are not certain. It did show that here were three hundred brave, watchful men, obedient to orders, and ready for the battle.

Then Ḡĭd′e-on, at God's command, sent back to the camp on Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ all the rest of his army, nearly ten thousand men; keeping with himself only his little band of three hundred. But before the battle God gave to Ḡĭd′e-on one more sign, that he might be the more encouraged.

God said to Ḡĭd′e-on, "Go down with your servant into the camp of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes, and hear what they say. It will cheer your heart for the fight."

Then Ḡĭd′e-on crept down the mountain with his servant, and walked around the edge of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-īte camp, just as though he were one of their own men. He saw two men talking, and stood near to listen. One man said to the other:

"I had a strange dream in the night. I dreamed that I saw a loaf of barley bread come rolling down the mountain; and it struck the tent, and threw it down in a heap on the ground. What do you suppose that dream means?"

"That loaf of bread," said the other, "means Ḡĭd′e-on, a man of Ĭs̜′ra-el, who will come down and destroy this army; for the Lord God has given us all into his hand."

Ḡĭd′e-on was glad when he heard this, for it showed that the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes, for all their number, were in fear of him and of his army, even more than his men had feared the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes. He gave thanks to God, and hastened back to his camp, and made ready to lead his men against the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes.

Ḡĭd′e-on's plan did not need a large army; but it needed a few careful, bold men, who should do exactly as their leader commanded them. He gave to each man a lamp, a pitcher, and a trumpet, and told the men just what was to be done with them. The lamp was lighted, but was placed inside the pitcher, so that it could not be seen. He divided his men into three companies; and very quietly led them down the mountain, in the middle of the night; and arranged them all in order around the camp of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes.

Then at one moment a great shout rang out in the darkness, "The sword of the Lord and of Ḡĭd′e-on," and after it came a crash of breaking pitchers, and then a flash of light in every direction. The three hundred men had given the shout, and broken their pitchers, so that on every side lights were shining. The men blew their trumpets with a mighty noise; and the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes were roused from sleep, to see enemies all round them, lights beaming and swords flashing in the darkness, while everywhere the sharp sound of the trumpets was heard.

They were filled with sudden terror and thought only of escape, not of fighting. But wherever they turned, their enemies seemed to be standing with swords drawn. They trampled each other down to death, flying from the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Their own land was in the east, across the river Jôr′dan, and they fled in that direction, down one of the valleys between the mountains.

Ḡĭd′e-on had thought that the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes would turn toward their own land, if they should be beaten in the battle; and he had already planned to cut off their flight. The ten thousand men in the camp he had placed on the sides of the valley leading to the Jôr′dan. There they slew very many of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes as they fled down the steep pass toward the river. And Ḡĭd′e-on had also sent to the men of the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, who had thus far taken no part in the war, to hold the only place at the river where men could wade through the water. Those of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes who had escaped from Ḡĭd′e-on's men on either side of the valley were now met by the Ē′phră-ĭm-ītes at the river, and many more of them were slain. Among the slain were two of the princes of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes, named Ō′reb and Zē′eb.

A part of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-īte army was able to get across the river, and to continue its flight toward the desert; but Ḡĭd′e-on and his brave three hundred men followed closely after them; fough another battle with them, destroyed them utterly, and took their two kings, Zē′bah and Zăl-mŭn′nȧ, whom they killed. After this great victory the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were freed forever from the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes. They never again ventured to leave their home in the desert to make war on the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el.

The tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, in the middle of the land, was one of the most powerful of the twelve tribes. Its leaders were quite displeased with Ḡĭd′e-on, because their part in the victory had been so small. They said to Ḡĭd′e-on, in an angry manner, "Why did you not send word to us, when you were calling for men to fight the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes?"

But Ḡĭd′e-on knew how to make a kind answer. He said to them, "What have I done as compared with you? Did you not kill thousands of the Mĭd′ĭ-an-ītes at the crossing of the Jôr′dan? Did you not take their two princes, Ō′reb and Zē′eb? What could my men have done without the help of your men?" By gentle words and words of praise Ḡĭd′e-on made the men of Ē′phră-ĭm friendly.

And after this, as long as Ḡĭd′e-on lived, he ruled as judge in Ĭş′ra-el. The people wished him to make himself a king. "Rule over us as king," they said, "and let your son be king after you, and his son king after him." But Ḡĭd′e-on said, "No; you have a king already; for the Lord God is the King of Ĭş′ra-el. No one but God shall be king over these tribes."

Of all the fifteen men who ruled as judges in Ĭş′ra-el, Ḡĭd′e-on, the fifth judge, was the greatest, in courage, in wisdom, and in faith in God.

If all the people of Ĭş′ra-el had been like him, there would have been no worship of idols, and no weakness before enemies, Ĭş′ra-el would have been strong and faithful before God. But as soon as Ḡĭd′e-on died, and even before his death, his people began once more to turn away from the Lord and to seek the idol-gods that could give them no help.

Story Eleven

JEPHTHAH'S RASH PROMISE, AND WHAT CAME FROM IT

Judges viii : 33, to xi : 40.

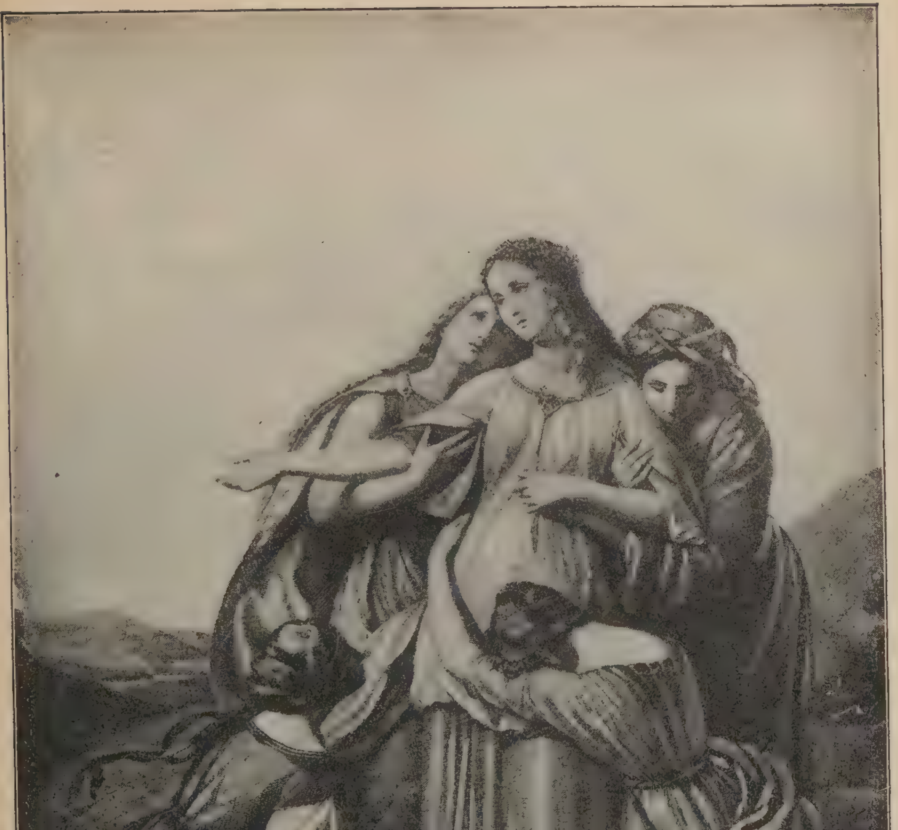
ALTHOUGH Gĭd′e-on had refused to become a king, even when all the tribes desired him, after his death, one of his sons, whose name was Ȧ-bĭm′e-lĕch, tried to make himself a king. He began by killing all his brothers, except one who escaped. But his rule was only over Shē′chem and a few places near it, and lasted only a few years; so that he was never named among the kings of Ĭş′ra-el. Ȧ-bĭm′e-lĕch is sometimes called the sixth of the judges, though he did not deserve the title. After him came Tō′la, the seventh judge, and Jā′īr, the eighth. Of these two judges very little is told.

After this the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes again began to worship the idols of the Cā′năan-ītes, and again fell under the power of their enemies. The Ăm′mon-ītes came against them from the southeast and held rule over the tribes on the east of Jôr′dan. This was the sixth of "the oppressions"; and the man who set Ĭş′ra-el free was Jĕph′thah. He called together the men of the tribes on the east of Jôr′dan—Reu̧′ben, Găd, and the half-tribe of Mȧ-năs′seh—and fought against the Ăm′mon-ītes.

Before Jĕph′thah went to the battle he said to the Lord: "If thou wilt give me victory over the Ăm′mon-ītes, then when I come back from the battle, whatever comes out of the house to meet me shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up as a burnt-offering."

This was not a wise promise, nor a right one; for God had told the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes long before what offerings were commanded, as oxen and sheep, and what were forbidden. But Jĕph′thah had lived on the border near the desert, far from the house of God at Shī′lōh, and he knew very little about God's law.

Jĕph′thah fought the Ăm′mon-ītes and won a victory, and drove

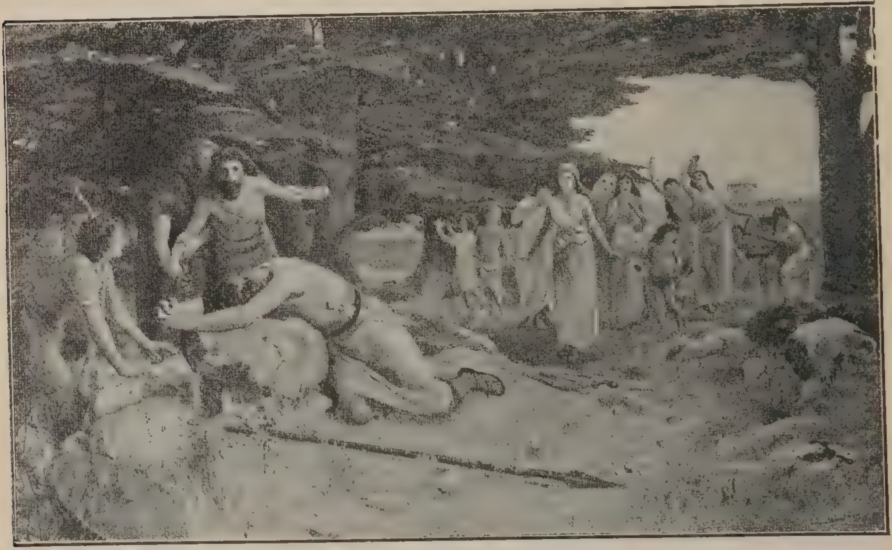


JĔPH'THAH'S DAUGHTER AND HER YOUNG FRIENDS.

the enemies out of the land. Then, as he was going back to his home, his daughter, who was his only child, came out to meet him, leading the young girls, her companions, dancing and making music, to welcome his return. When Jĕph′thah saw her he cried out in sorrow, "Oh, my daughter, what trouble you bring with you! I have given a promise to the Lord, and now I must keep it!"

As soon as his daughter had learned what promise her father had made she met it bravely, as a true daughter of Ĭş′ra-el. She said:

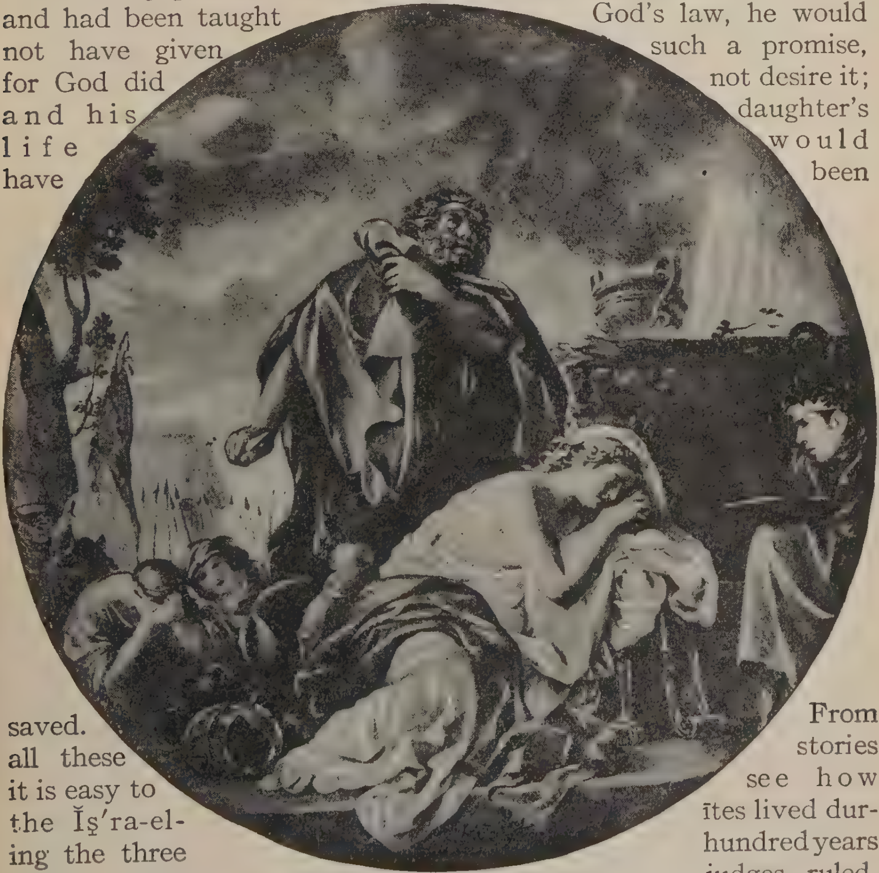
"My father, you have made a solemn promise to the Lord, and you shall keep it, for God has given to you victory over the enemies of your people. But let me live a little while and weep with my young friends over the death that I must suffer."



JĔPH′THAH MOURNING FOR HIS DAUGHTER.

For two months she stayed with the young girls upon the mountains, for perhaps she feared that if she was at home with her father he would fail to keep his promise. Then she gave herself up to death, and her father did with her as he had promised.

In all the history of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes this was the only time when a living man or woman was offered in sacrifice to the Lord. Among all the nations around Ĭş′ra-el the people offered human lives, even those of their own children, to the idols which they worshipped. But the people of Ĭş'ra-el remembered what God had taught Ā'bră-hăm when he was about to offer up Ī'şaac; and they never, except this once, laid a human offering upon God's altar. If Jĕph'thah had lived near the Tabernacle at Shī'lōh, and had been taught God's law, he would not have given such a promise, for God did not desire it; and his daughter's life would have been saved. From all these stories it is easy to see how the Ĭş'ra-el-ītes lived during the three hundred years while the judges ruled. There was no strong power to which all gave obedience; but each family lived as it chose. Many people worshipped the Lord; but many more turned from the Lord to the idols, and then turned back to the Lord, after they had fallen under the hand of their enemies. In one part of the land they were free; in another part they were ruled by the foreign peoples.



JĔPH'THAH OFFERS UP HIS DAUGHTER.

Story Twelve

THE STRONG MAN: HOW HE LIVED AND HOW HE DIED

Judges xiii : 1, to xvi : 31.

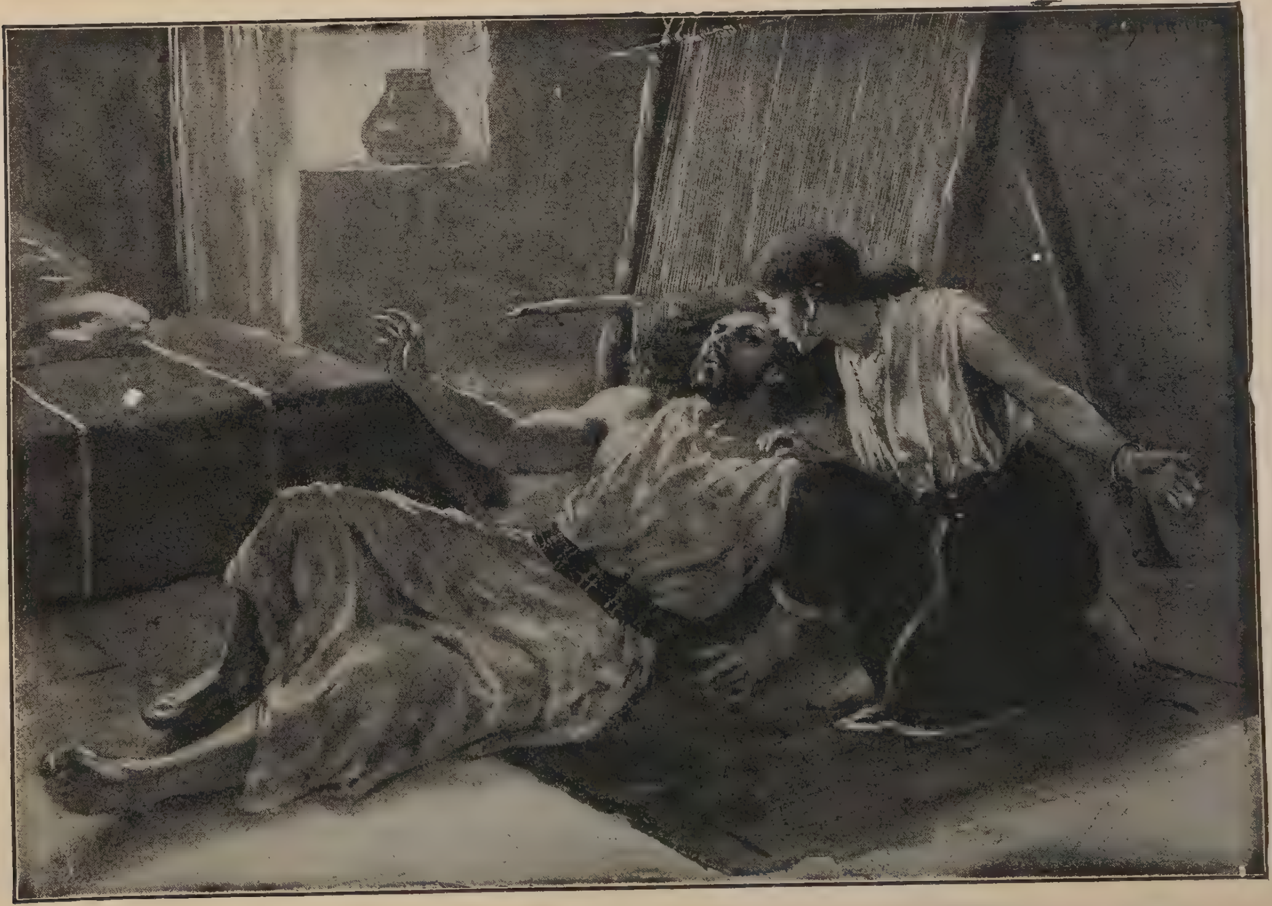
AFTER Jĕph′thah three judges ruled in turn, named Ĭb′zăn, Ē′lŏn, and Ăb′dŏn. None of these were men of war, and in their days the land was quiet.

But the people of Ĭş′ra-el again began to worship idols; and as a punishment God allowed them once more to pass under the power of their enemies. The seventh oppression, which now fell upon Ĭş′ra-el, was by far the hardest, the longest, and the most widely spread of any, for it was over all the tribes. It came from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, a strong and warlike people, who lived on the west of Ĭş′ra-el upon the plain beside the Great Sea. They worshipped an idol called Dā′gon, which was made in the form of a fish's head on a man's body.

These people, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, sent their armies up from the plain beside the sea to the mountains of Ĭş′ra-el, and overran all the land.

They took away from the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes all their swords and spears, so that they could not fight; and they robbed their land of all the crops, so that the people suffered for want of food. And as before, the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes in their trouble cried to the Lord, and the Lord heard their prayer.

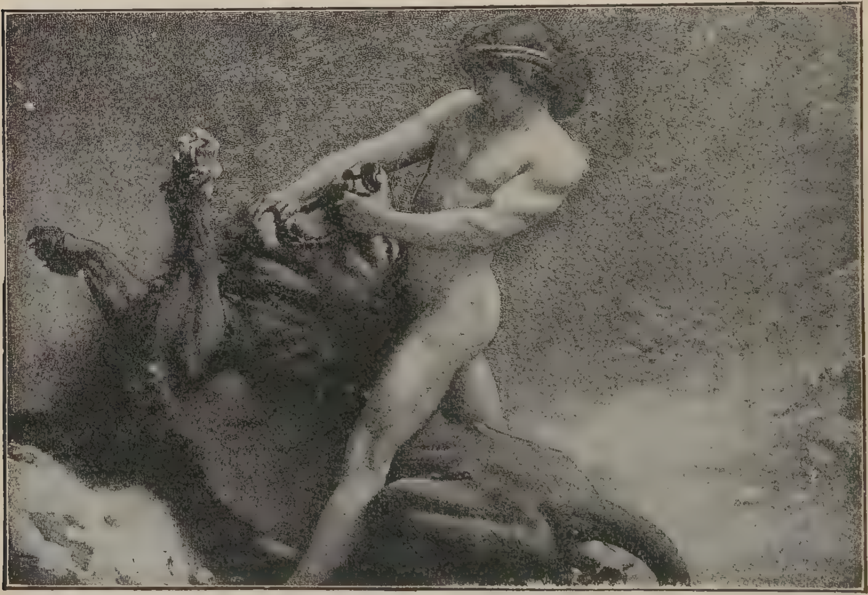
In the tribe-land of Dăn, which was next to the country of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, there was living a man named Mȧ-nō′ah. One day an angel came to his wife, and said, "You shall have a son; and when he grows up he will begin to save Ĭş′ra-el from the hand of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. But your son must never drink any wine or strong drink as long as he lives. And his hair must be allowed to grow long, and must never be cut, for he shall be a Năz′a-rīte under a vow to the Lord."



DĒ-LĪ'LAH TRIES TO LEARN FROM SĂM'SON THE SECRET OF HIS STRENGTH.

When a child was given especially to God, or when a man gave himself to some work for God, he was forbidden to drink wine, and as a sign, his hair was left to grow long while the vow or promise, to God was upon him. Such a person as this was called a Năz′a-rīte, a word which means "one who has a vow," and Mă-nō′ah's child was to be a Năz′a-rīte, and under a vow, as long as he lived.

The child was born, and was named Săm′son. He grew up to become the strongest man of whom the Bible tells. Săm′son was no general, like Gĭd′e-on or Jĕph′thah, to call out his people and lead them in war. He did much to set his people free; but all that he did was by his own strength, without any help from other men.



YOUNG SĂM′SON SLAYS THE LION.

When Săm′son became a young man he went down to Tĭm′nath, in the land of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. There he saw a young Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne woman whom he loved, and wished to have as his wife. His father and mother were not pleased that he should marry among the enemies of his own people. They did not know that God would make this marriage the means of bringing harm upon the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and of helping the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes.

As Săm′son was going down to Tĭm′nath, to see this young woman, a hungry young lion came out of the mountain, growling and roaring. Săm′son seized the lion, and tore him in pieces as easily as another man would have killed a little kid of the goats; and then went on his way. He made his visit, and came home, but said nothing to any one about the lion.

After a time Săm′son went again to Tĭm′nath, for his marriage with the Phĭ-lĭs′tīne woman. On his way he stopped to look at the dead lion; and in its body he found a swarm of bees, and honey which they had made. He took some of the honey, and ate it as he walked; but told no one of it.

At the wedding-feast, which lasted a whole week, there were many Phĭ-lĭs′tīne young men; and they amused each other with questions and riddles.

"I will give you a riddle," said Săm′son. "If you answer it during the feast, I will give you thirty suits of clothing. And if you cannot answer it, then you must give me thirty suits of clothing."

"Let us hear your riddle," they said. And this was Săm′son's riddle for the young men of the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş to answer:

"Out of the eater came forth meat.
And out of the strong came forth sweetness."

They could not find the answer, though they tried to find it, all that day, and the two days that followed. And at last they came to Săm′son's wife, and said to her, "Coax your husband to tell you the answer. If you do not find it out, we will set your house on fire, and burn you and all your people."

And Săm′son's wife urged him to tell her the answer. She cried and pleaded with him, and said, "If you really love me, you would not keep this a secret from me."

At last Săm′son yielded, and told his wife how he had killed the lion and afterward found the honey in its body. She told her people, and just before the end of the feast they came to Săm′son with the answer. They said, "What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion?"

And Săm′son said to them, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you had not found out my riddle."

By his "heifer"—which is a young cow—of course Săm′son meant his wife. Then Săm′son was required to give them thirty suits of clothing. He went out among the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, killed the first thirty men whom he found, took off their clothes, and gave them to the guests at the feast. But all this made Săm′son very angry. He left his new wife and went home to his father's house. Then the parents of his wife gave her to another man.

But after a time Săm′son's anger passed away, and he went again to Tĭm′nath to see his wife. But her father said to him, "You went away angry, and I supposed that you cared nothing for her. I gave her to another man, and now she is his wife. But here is her younger sister; you can take her for your wife instead."

But Săm′son would not take his wife's sister. He went out very angry, determined to do harm to the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, because they had cheated him. He caught all the wild foxes that he could find, until he had three hundred of them. Then he tied them together in pairs, by their tails; and between each pair of foxes he tied to their tails a piece of dry wood which he set on fire. These foxes with firebrands on their tails he turned loose among the fields of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş when the grain was ripe. They ran wildly over the fields, set the grain on fire, and burned it; and with the grain the olive-trees in the fields.

When the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş saw their harvests destroyed, they said, "Who has done this?"

And people said, "Săm′son did this, because his wife was given by her father to another man."

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş looked on Săm′son's father-in-law as the cause of their loss; and they came, and set his house on fire, and burned the man and his daughter whom Săm′son had married. Then Săm′son came down again, and alone fought a company of Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and killed them all, as a punishment for burning his wife.

After this Săm′son went to live in a hollow place in a split rock, called the rock of Ē′tăm. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came up in a great army, and overran the fields in the tribe-land of Jū′dah.

"Why do you come against us?" asked the men of Jū′dah. "What do you want from us?" "We have come," they said, "to bind Săm′son, and to deal with him as he has dealt with our people."

The men of Jū′dah said to Săm′son, "Do you not know that the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş are ruling over us? Why do you make them angry by killing their people? You see that we suffer through your pranks.

Now we must bind you, and give you to the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş; or they will ruin us all."

And Săm′son said, "I will let you bind me, if you will promise not to kill me yourselves; but only to give me safely into the hands of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş."

They made the promise; and Săm′son gave himself up to them, and allowed them to tie him up fast with new ropes. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş shouted for joy as they saw their enemy brought to them, led in bonds by his own people. Little did they know what was to happen. For as soon as Săm′son came among them he burst the bonds as though they had been light strings; and picked up from the ground the jawbone of an ass, and struck right and left with it as with a sword. He killed almost a thousand of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş with this strange weapon. Afterward he sang a song about it, thus:

> "With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,
> With the jawbone of an ass, have I slain a thousand men."

After this Săm′son went down to the chief city of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, which was named Gā′zȧ. It was a large city; and like all large cities was surrounded with a high wall. When the men of Gā′zȧ found Săm′son in their city, they shut the gates, thinking that they could now hold him as a prisoner. But in the night, Săm′son rose up, went to the gates, pulled their posts out of the ground, and put the gates with their posts upon his shoulder. He carried them twenty miles away, and left them on the top of a hill not far from the city of Hē′bron.

After this Săm′son saw another woman among the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and he loved her. The name of this woman was Dḗ-lī′lah. The rulers of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came to Dḗ-lī′lah, and said to her:

"Find out, if you can, what it is that makes Săm′son so strong; and tell us. If you help us to get control of him, so that we can have him in our power, we will give you a great sum of money."

And Dḗ-lī′lah coaxed and pleaded with Săm′son to tell her what it was that made him so strong. Săm′son said to her, "If they will tie me with seven green twigs from a tree, then I shall not be strong any more."

They brought her seven green twigs, like those of a willow tree; and she bound Săm′son with them while he was asleep. Then she called out to him, "Wake up, Săm′son, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş are coming against you!"

And Săm′son rose up, and broke the twigs as easily as if they had been charred in the fire, and went away with ease.

And Dė-lī′lah tried again to find his secret. She said, "You are only making fun of me. Now tell me truly how you can be bound."

And Săm′son said, "Let them bind me with new ropes, that have never been used before; and then I cannot get away."

While Săm′son was asleep again, Dė-lī′lah bound him with new ropes. Then she called out as before, "Get up, Săm′son, for the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş are coming!" And when Săm′son rose up, the ropes broke as if they were thread. And Dė-lī′lah again urged him to tell her; and he said:

"You notice that my long hair is in seven locks. Weave it together in the loom, just as if it were the threads in a piece of cloth."

Then, while he was asleep, she wove his hair in the loom, and fastened it with a large pin to the weaving-frame. But when he awoke, he rose up, and carried away the pin and the beam of the weaving-frame, for he was as strong as before.

And Dė-lī′lah said, "Why do you tell me that you love me, as long as you deceive me, and keep from me your secret!" And she pleaded with him day after day, until at last he yielded to her, and told her the real secret of his strength. He said:

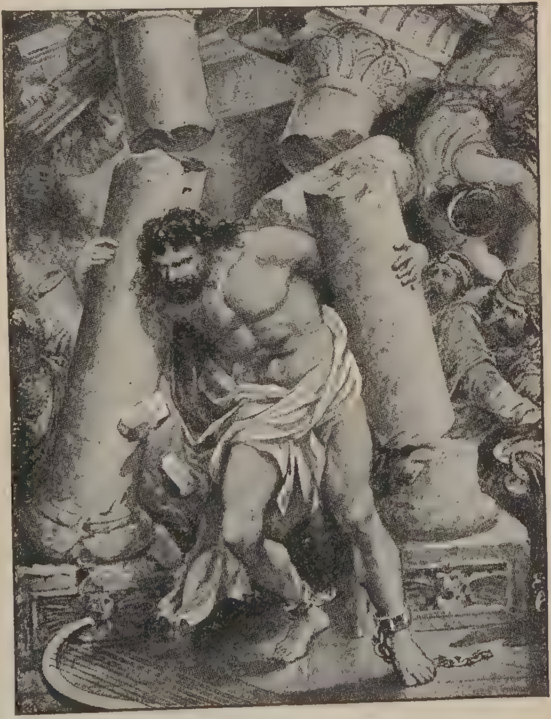
"I am a Năz′a-rīte, under a vow to the Lord not to drink wine, and not to allow my hair to be cut. If I should let my hair be cut short, then the Lord would forsake me, and my strength would go from me, and I would be like other men."

Then Dė-lī′lah knew that she had found the truth at last. She sent for the rulers of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, saying, "Come up this once, and you shall have your enemy; for I am sure now that he has told me all that is in his heart."

Then, while the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were watching outside, Dė-lī′lah let Săm′son go to sleep, with his head upon her knees. While he was sound asleep, they took a razor and shaved off all his hair. Then she called out as at other times, "Rise up, Săm′son; the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş are upon you."

He awoke, and rose up, expecting to find himself strong as before; for he did not at first know that his long hair had been cut off. But he had broken his vow to the Lord, and the Lord had left him. He was now as weak as other men, and helpless in the hands of his enemies. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş easily made him their prisoner; and that he might never do them more harm, they put out his eyes. Then they chained him with fetters, and sent him to prison at Gā′zȧ. And in the prison they made Săm′son turn a heavy millstone to grind grain, just as though he were a beast of burden.

But while Săm′son was in prison his hair grew long again; and with his hair his strength came back to him, for Săm′son renewed his vow to the Lord.



SĂM′SON PULLING DOWN THE TEMPLE.

One day a great feast was held by the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş in the temple of their fish-god Dā′gon. For they said, "Our god has given Săm′son our enemy into our hands. Let us be glad together and praise Dā′gon."

And the temple was thronged with people, and the roof over it was also crowded with more than three thousand men and women. They sent for Săm′son, to rejoice over him; and Săm′son was led into the court of the temple, before all the people, to amuse them. After a time, Săm′son said to the boy who was leading him:

"Take me up to the front of the temple, so that I may stand by one of the pillars, and lean against it."

And while Săm′son stood between two of the pillars, he prayed to the Lord God of Īş′ra-el, and said, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and give me strength only this once, O God; and help me, that I may obtain vengeance upon the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş for my two eyes!"

Then he placed one arm around the pillar on one side, and the other arm around the pillar on the other side, and he said, "Let me die with the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş."

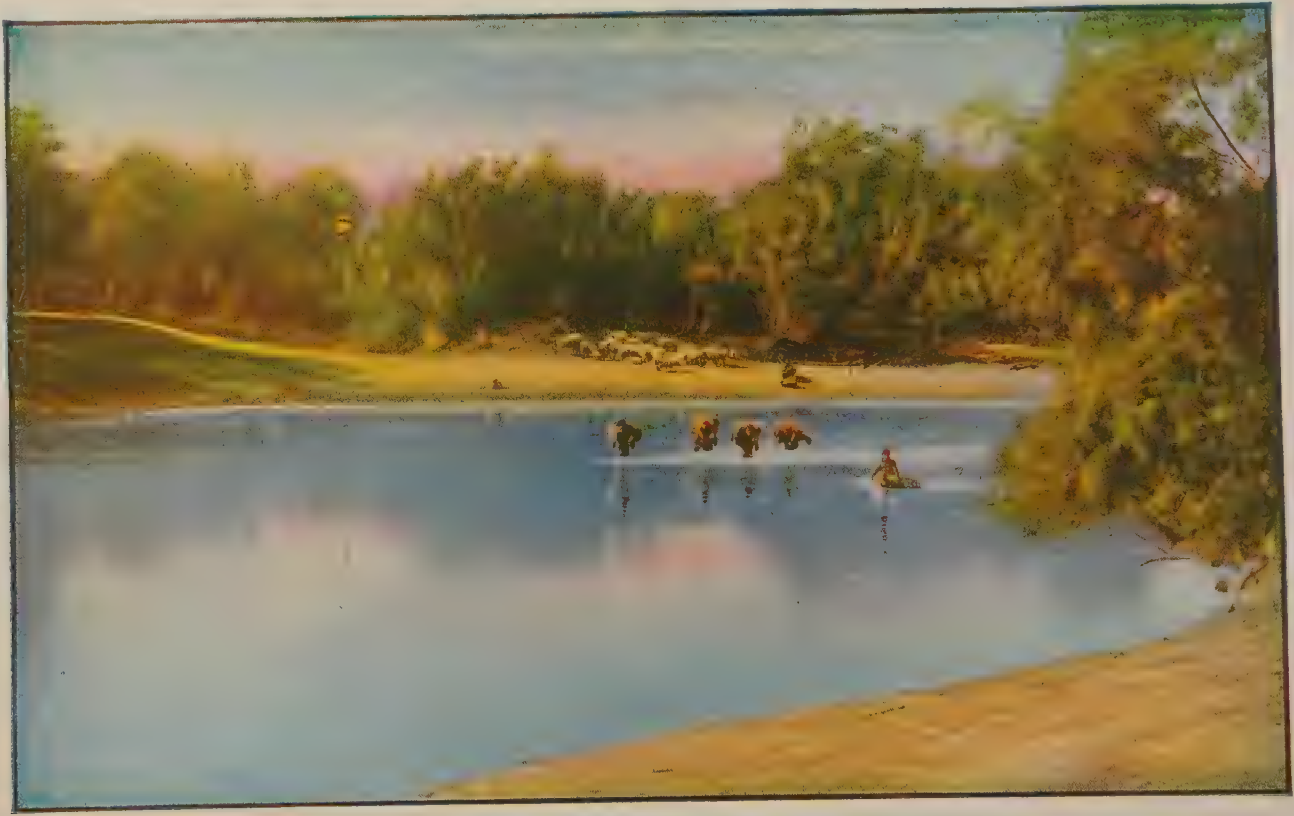
And he bowed forward with all his might, and pulled the pillars over with him, bringing down the roof and all upon it upon those that were under it. Săm′son himself was among the dead; but in his death he killed more of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş than he had killed during his life.

Then in the terror which came upon the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş the men of Săm′son's tribe came down and found his dead body, and buried it in their own land. After that it was years before the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş tried again to rule over the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes.

Săm′son did much to set his people free, but he might have done much more, if he had led his people, instead of trusting alone to his own strength; and if he had lived more earnestly, and not done his deeds as though he was playing pranks and making jokes upon his enemies. There were deep faults in Săm′son, but at the end he sought God's help and found it; and God used Săm′son to begin to set his people free.

The tribe to which Săm′son belonged was the tribe of Dăn, a people who lived on the edge of the mountain country, between the mountains and the plains by the sea-coast, which was the home of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. The tribe-land of Dăn was northwest of Jū′dah, southwest of Ē′phră-ĭm, and west of Bĕn′ja-mĭn. Săm′son ruled over his own tribe, but not much over the other tribes. Yet his deeds of courage and strength kept the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, during his lifetime, from getting control over the lands of Jū′dah and Bĕn′ja-mĭn; so that Săm′son helped to save Ĭş′ra-el from its enemies.

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



SHEPHERDS CROSSING THE RIVER JORDAN WITH THEIR SHEEP

Story Thirteen

THE IDOL TEMPLE AT DAN, AND ITS PRIEST

Judges xvii : 1, to xviii : 31.

WHILE the judges were ruling in Ĭş′ra-el, at one time there was living in the mountains of Ē′phră-ĭm, near the road which ran north and south, a man named Mī′cah. His mother, who was dwelling with him, found that some one had stolen from her a large sum of money. Now, the money had been taken by her son Mī′cah, and after a time he said to her:

"Those eleven hundred pieces of silver which you lost, and of which you spoke, are with me; for I took them myself."

And his mother answered, "May the blessing of God rest upon you, my son, for bringing again to me my silver. This money shall be the Lord's. I will give it back to you, to be used in the service of the Lord."

But instead of taking the money to the Tabernacle of the Lord at Shī′lōh, Mī′cah used it to make two images of silver, one carved and the other cast in metal. These he set up in his house to be worshipped. He appointed one of his sons as a priest, and thus made of his house an idol temple.

One day a man on a journey was passing by Mī′cah's house. Mī′cah saw from his dress that he belonged to the tribe of Lē′vī, from which the priests came. He said to him, "Who are you? From what place do you come?"

The young man said, "I am a Lē′vīte, from Běth′-lě-hěm in the land of Jū′dah, and I am trying to find a place where I can earn my living."

"Stay here with me," said Mī′cah, "and be a priest in my house. I will give you your food, and a place to sleep, and for each year a suit of clothes and ten pieces of silver."

The Lē′vīte was well pleased at this, and stayed in Mī′cah's house, and became his priest. And Mī′cah said to himself:

"I am sure that now the Lord will be pleased with me, since I have a house with gods and a Lē′vīte as my priest."

Already many in Ĭş′ra-el had forgotten that God would not bless those who set up idols when they should worship the Lord God.

The tribe of Dăn was living at that time between the country of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş and the tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn, having Jū′dah on the south and Ē′phră-ĭm on the north. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş pressed closely upon them, and they sought some place where they could live with more room and at peace.

They sent out from their tribe-land five men as spies, to go through the country and find some better place for the home of their tribe. These five men walked through the land, and they came to the house of Mī′cah. Mī′cah took them into his house, for it was the custom thus to care for people who were on a journey.

These men from Dăn, who were called Dăn′ītes, had seen Mī′cah's priest before in his earlier home. They knew him, and asked him how he came to be there. The young Lē′vīte told them that Mī′cah had hired him to become his priest. He took them into the temple-room and showed them the images and the altar, and he offered a sacrifice and a prayer for them.

Then the five men left Mī′cah's house and went on their way. They walked through all the tribes in the north; and far up among the mountains, near one of the great fountains where the river Jôr′dan begins, they found a little city called Lā′ish. The people of Lā′ish were not Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, but came from the country of Zī′dŏn. The Dăn′ītes saw that their little city was far from Zī′dŏn, and that its people were living alone, with none of their own race to help them.

The men of Dăn walked back over the mountains to their own people, near the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne country; and they brought back an account of their journey through the land. They said:

"We have found a good place, far up in the north, where there is room for us, and a rich soil, and plenty of water. Come with us, and let us take that place for our home."

So a large part of the tribe of Dăn, with their wives and their children, went up toward this place. Among them were six hundred men with shields, and swords, and spears for war. As they came near to Mī′cah's house, one of the five men who had been there before said to them;

"Do you know that in one of these houses there is an altar, and a carved image, and another image, both of silver? Now think what you would better do."

Then the five men came again into Mī′cah's temple while the six hundred soldiers stood outside. They were just about to carry away the silver images when the Lē′vīte said to them, "What are you doing?"

A HARVEST FIELD IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.

And the men said to him, "Never mind what we are doing. Keep still and come with us. Is it not better for you to be a priest to a whole tribe than to one man?"

Then the young priest said no more. He took away all the priestly robes, and the silver ornaments, and the images, and went away with the people of Dăn. When Mī′cah came home he found that his temple had been robbed and his images and his priest were taken away.

He gathered some of his neighbors, and they hastened after the people of Dăn. When they caught up with them Mī′cah cried out aloud to them. The men of Dăn turned, and said to Mī′cah:

"What is the matter with you, that you come after us with a company and make such a noise?"

And Mī′cah answered, "You have taken away my gods which I made, and my priest; and now what is left to me? And you say to me, 'What is the matter?'"

Then the men of Dăn said, "Be careful what you say, or you may make some of our men angry, and they will fall on you, and then you will lose your life!"

Mī′cah saw that the men of Dăn were too strong for him to fight them, so he went back to his house without his priest and without his images. The Dăn′ītes went up to the little city of Lā′ish, in the north. They took it, and killed all the people who were living there. Then they built the city again, and changed its name to Dăn, the name of the father of their tribe.

There, at Dăn, they built a temple, and in it they set up the images, and this Lē′vīte became their priest. And the strangest part of all the story is, that this Lē′vīte was a grandson of Mō′ṣeṣ, the man of God and the great prophet. So soon did the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el fall into sin, and so deeply, that the grandson of Mō′ṣeṣ became the priest in a temple of idols. And at this time the house of God was at Shī′lōh; yet at Dăn during those years and for many years afterward was a temple of idols, and within its walls a line of priests descended from Mō′ṣeṣ were worshipping and offering sacrifices to images.

And as the temple of idols in Dăn was much nearer to the people in the northern part of the land than was the house of the Lord, the Tabernacle at Shī′lōh, very many of those who lived in the north, went to this idol-temple to worship. So the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el were led away from God to serve idols. This was very displeasing to God.

Story Fourteen

HOW RUTH GLEANED IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ.

Ruth i : 1, to iv: 22.

IN the time of the judges in Ĭş′ra-el, a man named Ê-lĭm′e-lĕch was living in the town of Bĕth=lĕ-hĕm, in the tribe of Jū′dah, about six miles south of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. His wife's name was Nȧ-ō′mī, and his two sons were Mäh′lon and Chĭl′ĭ-on. For some years the crops were poor, and food was scarce in Jū′dah; and Ê-lĭm′e-lĕch, with his family, went to live in the land of Mō′ab, which was on the east of the Dead Sea, as Jū′dah was on the west.

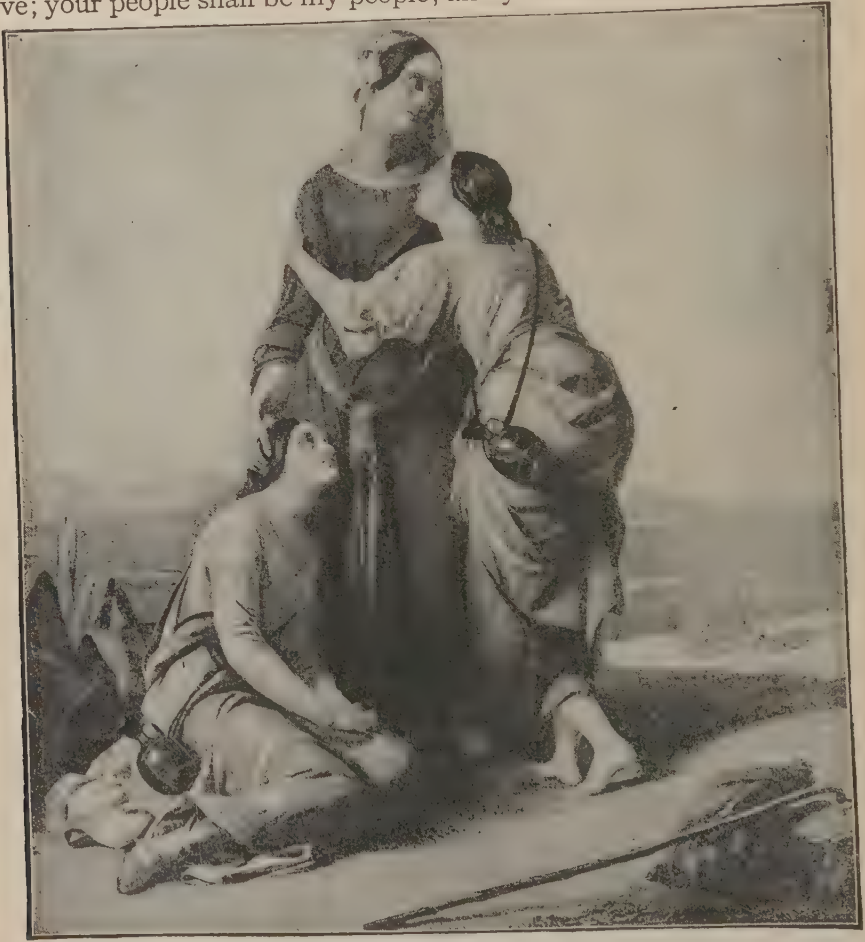
There they stayed ten years, and in that time Ê-lĭm′e-lĕch died. His two sons married women of the country of Mō′ab, one woman named Ôr′pah, the other named Rṳth. But the two young men also died in the land of Mō′ab, so that Nȧ-ō′mī and her two daughters-in-law were all left widows.

Nȧ-ō′mī heard that God had again given good harvests and bread to the land of Jū′dah, and she rose up to go from Mō′ab back to her own land and her own town of Bĕth′=lĕ-hĕm. Her two daughters-in-law loved her and both would have gone with her, though the land of Jū′dah was a strange land to them, for they were of the Mō′ab-īte people.

Nȧ-ō′mī said to them, "Go back, my daughters, to your own mothers' homes. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have been kind to your husbands and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you may yet find another husband and a happy home." Then Nȧ-ō′mī kissed them in farewell, and the three women all wept together. The two young widows said to her, "You have been a good mother to us, and we will go with you, and live among your people."

"No, no," said Nȧ-ō′mī. "You are young, and I am old. Go back and be happy among your own people."

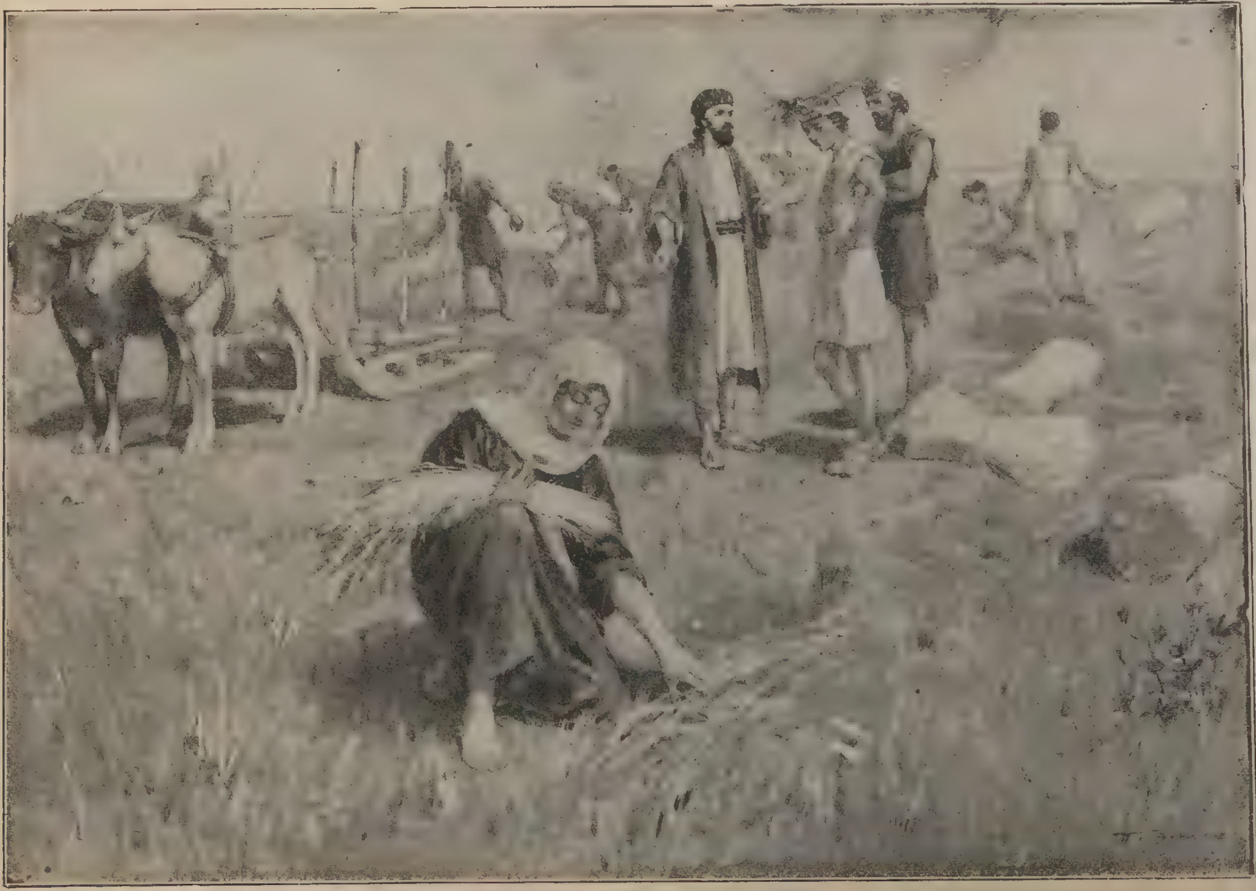
Then Ôr′pah kissed Nā̇-ō′mī and went back to her people; but Ru̥th would not leave her. She said, "Do not ask me to leave you, for I never will. Where you go, I will go; where you live, I will live; your people shall be my people; and your God shall be my God.



ÔR′PAH LEAVES NĀ̇-Ō′MĪ.

Where you die, I will die, and be buried.' Nothing but death itself shall part you and me."

When Nā̇-ō′mī saw that Ru̥th was firm in her purpose, she ceased trying to persuade her; so the two women went on together.



[illegible]

They walked around the Dead Sea, and crossed the river Jôr′dan, and climbed the mountains of Jū′dah, and came to Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm.

Nȧ-ō′mī had been absent from Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm for ten years, but her friends were all glad to see her again. They said, "Is this Nȧ-ō′mī, whom we knew years ago?" Now the name Nȧ-ō′mī means "pleasant." And Nȧ-ō′mī said:

"Call me not Nȧ-ō′mī; call me Mā′rȧ, for the Lord has made my life bitter. I went out full, with my husband and two sons; now I come home empty, without them. Do not call me 'Pleasant'; call me 'Bitter.'" The name "Mā′rȧ," by which Nȧ-ō′mī wished to be called, means "bitter." But Nȧ-ō′mī learned later that "Pleasant" was the right name for her after all.

There was living in Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm at that time a very rich man named Bō′ăz. He owned large fields that were abundant in their harvests; and he was related to the family of Ê′lĭm-e-lĕch, Nȧ-ō′mī's husband, who had died.

It was the custom in Ĭş′ra-el when they reaped the grain not to gather all the stalks, but to leave some for the poor people, who followed after the reapers with their sickles, and gathered what was left. When Nȧ-ō′mī and Ru̧th came to Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm it was the time of the barley harvest; and Ru̧th went out into the fields to glean the grain which the reapers had left. It so happened that she was gleaning in the field that belonged to Bō′ăz, this rich man.

Bō′ăz came out from the town to see his men reaping, and he said to them, "The Lord be with you"; and they answered him, "The Lord bless you." And Bō′ăz said to his master of the reapers, "Who is this young woman that I see gleaning in the field?"

The man answered, "It is the young woman from the land of Mō′ab, who came with Nâ-ō′mī. She asked leave to glean after the reapers, and has been here gathering grain since yesterday."

Then Bō′ăz said to Ru̧th, "Listen to me, my daughter. Do not go to any other field, but stay here with my young women. No one shall harm you; and when you are thirsty, go and drink at our vessels of water."

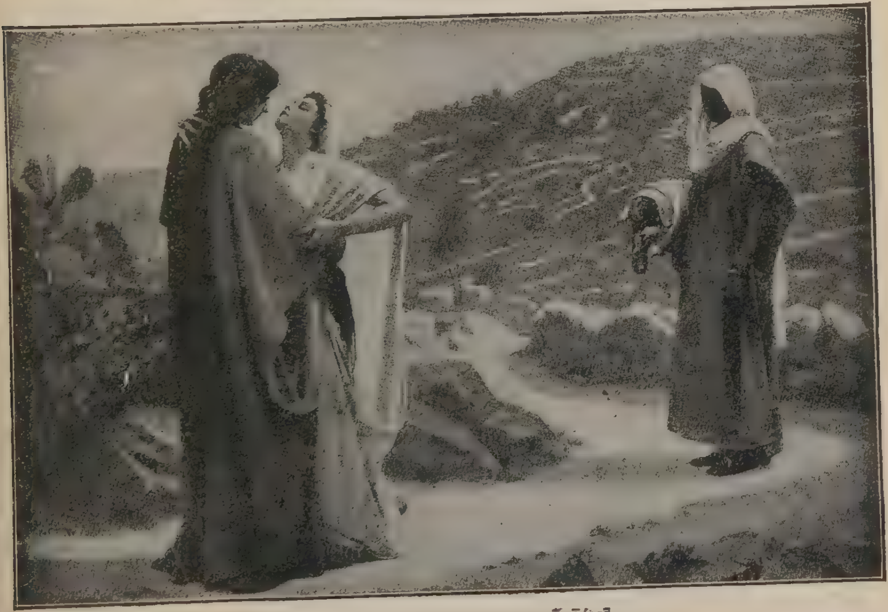
Then Ru̧th bowed to Bō′ăz, and thanked him for his kindness, all the more kind because she was a stranger in Ĭş′ra-el. Bō′ăz said:

"I have heard how true you have been to your mother-in-law, Nȧ-ō′mī, in leaving your own land and coming with her to this land.

May the Lord, under whose wings you have come, give you a reward!" And at noon, when they sat down to rest and to eat, Bō′ăz gave her some of the food. And he said to the reapers:

"When you are reaping, leave some of the sheaves for her; and drop out some sheaves from the bundles, where she may gather them."

That evening Ruth showed Nā-ō′mī how much she had gleaned, and told her of the rich man Bō′ăz, who had been so kind to her. And Nā-ō′mī said, "This man is a near relation of ours. Stay in his fields as long as the harvest lasts." And so Ruth gleaned in the fields of Bō′ăz until the harvest had been gathered.



RUTH WILL NOT LEAVE NĀ-Ō′MĪ.

At the end of the harvest Bō′ăz held a feast on the threshing-floor. And after the feast, by the advice of Nā-ō′mī, Ruth went to him, and said to him, "You are a near relation of my husband and of his father, Ē-lĭm′e-lĕch. Now will you not do good to us for his sake?"

And when Bō′ăz saw Ruth he loved her; and soon after this he took her as his wife. And Nā-ō′mī and Ruth went to live in his home; so that Nȧ-ō′mī's life was no more bitter, but pleasant. And Bō′ăz and Rụth had a son, whom they named Ō′bed; and later Ō′bed had a son named Jĕs′se; and Jĕs′se was the father of Ḍā′vid, the shepherd boy who became king. So Rụth, the young woman of Mō′ab, who chose the people and the God of Ĭş′ra-el, became the mother of kings.

Story Fifteen

THE LITTLE BOY WITH A LINEN COAT

I Samuel i : 1, to iii : 21.

SĂM′SON the strong man (see Story Twelve) ruled Ĭş′ra-el as the thirteenth of the judges; and after him came Ē′lī as the fourteenth judge. Ē′lī was also the high-priest of the Lord in the Tabernacle at Shī′lōh.

While Ē′lī was the priest and the judge, a man was living at Rā′mah in the mountains of Ē′phră-ĭm, whose name was Ĕl′kă-nah. He had two wives, as did many men in that time. One of these wives had children, but the other wife, whose name was Hăn′nah, had no child.

Every year Ĕl′kă-nah and his family went up to worship at the house of the Lord in Shī′lōh, which was about fifteen miles from his home. And at one of these visits Hăn′nah prayed to the Lord, saying:

"O Lord, if thou wilt look upon me, and give me a son, he shall be given to the Lord as long as he lives."

The Lord heard Hăn′nah's prayer, and gave her a little boy; and she called his name Săm′u-el, which means "Asked of God," because he had been given in answer to her prayer. While he was still a little child she brought him to Ē′lī, the priest, and said to him:

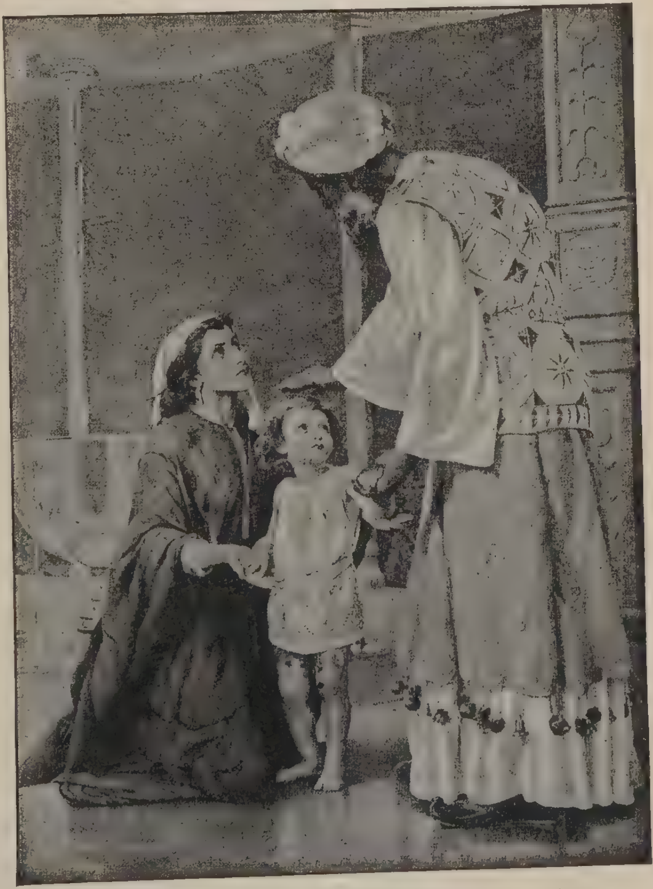
"My lord, I am the woman who stood here praying. I asked

COLUMBIA, MO.

God for this child; and now I have promised that he shall be the Lord's as long as he lives. Let him stay here with you and grow up in God's house."

So the child Săm′u-el stayed at Shī′lōh and lived with Ē′lī the priest in one of the tents beside the Tabernacle. As he grew up he helped Ē′lī in the work of the Lord's house. He lit the lamps, and opened the doors, and prepared the incense, and waited on Ē′lī, who was now growing old and was almost blind.

Săm′u-el was all the more a help and a comfort to Ē′lī because his own sons, who were priests, were very wicked young men. Ē′lī had not trained them to do right, nor punished them when they did wrong, when they were children; so they grew up to become evil, to disobey God's law, and to be careless in God's worship. Ē′lī's heart was very sad over the sins of his sons; but now that he was old he could do nothing to control them.



HĂN′NAH BRINGS HER BOY TO Ē′LĪ.

It had been a long time since God had spoken to men, as in other days God had spoken to Mō′ṣeṣ, to Jŏsh′u-ȧ, and to Gĭd′e-on. The men of Ĭṣ′ra-el were longing for the time to come when God would speak again to his people as of old.

One night Săm′u-el, while yet a child, was lying down upon his bed in a tent beside the Tabernacle; he heard a voice calling him by name. It was the Lord's voice, but Săm′u-el did not know it.

He answered, "Here I am!" and then he ran to Ē′lī, saying, "Here I am. You called me; what do you wish me to do?"

And Ē′lī said, "My child, I did not call you. Go and lie down again."

Săm′u-el lay down, but soon again heard the voice calling to him, "Săm′u-el! Săm′u-el!"

Again he rose up and went to Ē′lī, and said, "Here I am; for I am sure that you called me."

"No," said Ē′lī, "I did not call you. Lie down again."

A third time the voice was heard; and a third time the boy rose up from his bed and went to Ē′lī, sure that Ē′lī had called him. Ē′lī now saw that this was the Lord's voice that had spoken to Săm′u-el. He said:

"Go, lie down once more; and if the voice speaks to you again, say 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.'"

Săm′u-el went and lay down, and waited for the voice. It spoke as if some one unseen were standing by his bed, and saying, "Săm′u-el! Săm′u-el!"

Then Săm′u-el said to the Lord, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

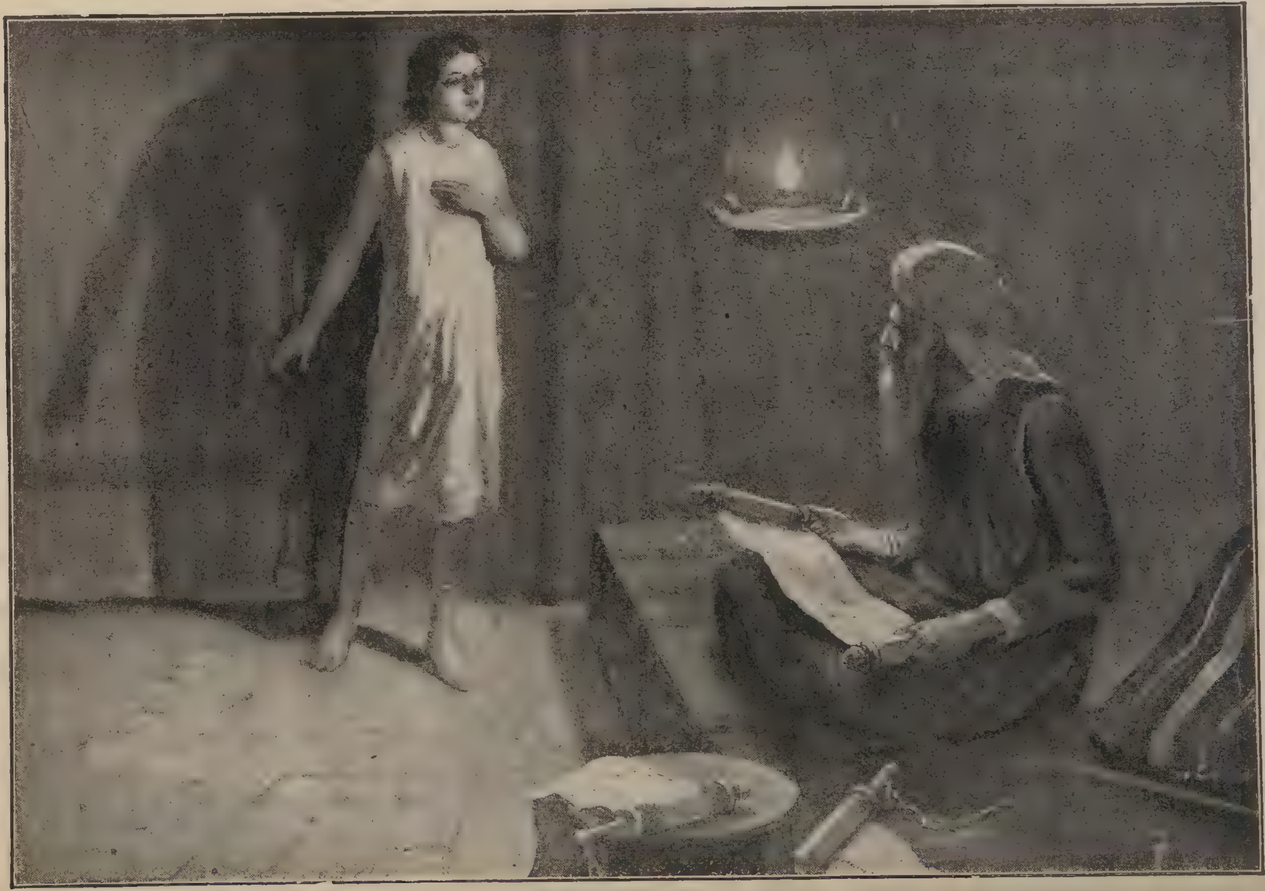
And the Lord said to Săm′u-el:

"Listen to what I say. I have seen the wickedness of Ē′lī's sons. And I have seen that their father did not punish them when they were doing evil. I am going to give to them such a punishment that the story shall make every one's ears tingle who hears it."

Săm′u-el lay in his room until the morning. Then he arose and went about his work as usual, preparing for the daily worship and opening the doors. He said nothing of God's voice until Ē′lī asked him. Ē′lī said to him:

"Săm′u-el, my son, tell me what the Lord said to you last night. Hide nothing from me."

And Săm′u-el told Ē′lī all that God had said, though it was a



[illegible]

sad message to Ē′lī. And Ē′lī said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him."

And then the news went through all the land that God had spoken once more to his people. And Hăn′nah, the lonely mother in the mountains of Ē′phră-ĭm, heard that her son was the prophet to whom God spoke as his messenger to all Ĭş′ra-el.

From that time God spoke to Săm′u-el, and Săm′u-el gave God's word to the twelve tribes.

Story Sixteen

HOW THE IDOL FELL DOWN BEFORE THE ARK

I Samuel iv : 1, to vii : 1.

WHILE the old priest Ē′lī was still the judge, though he was now very feeble, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came up against Ĭş′ra-el from the plain beside the sea. A battle was fought, and many of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were slain. Then the chiefs of the people said:

"We have been beaten in the battle, because the Lord was not with us. Let us take with us against our enemies the ark of the covenant from the Tabernacle, and then the Lord will be among us."

So they went to Shī′lōh, and they took out from the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle the ark of the covenant, and the two sons of Ē′lī the priest went with the ark to care for it. When the ark was brought into the camp of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes all the men of war gave a great shout, so that the earth rang with the sound.

And when the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş heard the shouting they wondered what caused it, and some one told them that it was because the God of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had come into their camp. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were afraid, and they said to each other:

"Woe unto us, for such a thing as this has never been seen! Who shall save us from this great God who sent plagues on the Ē-ġy̌p′tianş? Let us be bold, and act like men, and fight, so that we may not be made servants to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, as they have been to us!"

The next day there was a great battle. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş overcame the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes and slew thousands of them. They killed the two sons of Ē′lī, and they took the ark of the Lord away with them into their own land.

On the day of the battle Ē′lī, old and blind, was sitting beside the door of the Tabernacle, his heart trembling for the ark of the Lord. A man came from the army running, with his garments torn, and with earth on his head as a sign of sorrow. As the man came near the city and brought the news of the battle a great cry rose up from the people. When Ē′lī heard the noise he said:

"What does this noise mean? What has happened?"

The man came before Ē′lī, and said:

"I have just come from the army. There has been a great battle. Ĭş′ra-el has fled before the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and very many of the people have been killed. Your two sons are dead, and the ark of God has been taken by the enemy."

When the old man heard this last word, that the ark of God was taken, he fell backward from his seat and dropped dead upon the ground. And all the land mourned and wept over the loss of the ark more than over the victory of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş took the ark of God down to Ăsh′dŏd, one of their chief cities. They set it in the temple of Dā′gon, their fish-headed idol. The next morning, when they came into the temple, the image of Dā′gon was lying upon its face before the ark of the Lord. They stood the image up again; but on the next morning, not only was Dā′gon fallen down before the ark, but the hands and the head of Dā′gon had been cut off and were lying on the floor.

Besides all this, in the city of Ăsh′dŏd, where the ark had been taken, all the people began to have boils and sores. They saw in this the hand of the God of Ĭş′ra-el, and they sent the ark to Găth, another of their cities. There, too, the people broke out with boils and sores. They sent the ark to Ĕk′rŏn, but the people of that city said:

"We will not have the ark of God among us. Send it back to its own land, or we shall all die."

Then the rulers of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş resolved to send back the ark of God into the land of Ĭş′ra-el. They placed it upon a wagon, and before the wagon they yoked two cows. The cows had calves, but they tied the calves at home, in order to find whether the cows would go home to their calves or would take the ark away. But the cows took the road which led away from their own calves, straight up the hills toward the land of Ĭş′ra-el, and they turned neither to the right hand nor the left.

The cows drew the ark up to the village of Bĕth=shē′mesh, where the people were reaping their wheat harvest on the hillsides. They saw the ark, and were glad. The cows stopped beside a great stone in the field. Then the men of Bĕth=shē′mesh cut up the wagon, and with it made a fire, and on the stone as an altar offered the two cows as an offering to the Lord.

But the men of Bĕth=shē′mesh opened the ark and looked into it. This was contrary to God's command, for none but the priests were allowed to touch the ark. God sent a plague upon the people of that place, and many of them died, because they did not deal reverently with the ark of God.

They were filled with fear and sent to the men of Kĭr′jath=jē′a-rĭm, asking them to take the ark away. They did so, and for twenty years the ark stood in the house of a man named Ȧ-bĭn′a-dăb in Kĭr′jath=jē′a-rĭm.

They did not take the ark back to Shī′lōh, for after the death of Ē′lī the place was deserted, the Tabernacle fell into ruins, and no man lived there again.

Story Seventeen

THE LAST OF THE JUDGES

I Samuel vii : 2 to 17.

WHEN the ark of God was taken and the Tabernacle fell into ruins, Săm′u-el was still a boy. He went to his father's house at Rā′mah, which was in the mountains, about four miles north of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. Rā′mah was the home of Săm′u-el after this as long as he lived.

For some years, while Săm′u-el was growing up, there was no judge in Ĭş′ra-el, and no head of the tribes. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş ruled the people and took from them a large part of their harvests, their sheep, and their oxen. Often in their need they thought of the ark of the Lord, standing alone in the house at Kĭr′jath-jē′a-rĭm. And the eyes of all the people turned to the young Săm′u-el growing up at Rā′mah. For Săm′u-el walked with God, and God spoke to Săm′u-el, as God had spoken to Ā′bră-hăm, and to Mō′şeş, and to Jŏsh′u-ȧ.

As soon as Săm′u-el had grown up to be a man, he began to go among the tribes and to give to the people everywhere God's word to them. And this was what Săm′u-el said:

"If you will really come back with all your heart to the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el, put away the false gods, the images of Bā′al, and of Ăsh-ē′rah, and seek the Lord alone and serve him, then God will set you free from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.

After Săm′u-el's words the people began to throw down the idols and to pray to the God of Ĭş′ra-el. And Săm′u-el called the people from all the land to gather in one place, as many as could come. They met at a place called Mĭz′pah, in the mountains of Bĕn′ja-mĭn, not far from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm.

There Săm′u-el prayed for the people, and asked God to forgive their sin in turning away from God to idols. They confessed their wrong-doings, and made a solemn promise to serve the Lord and to serve the Lord only.

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş upon the plain beside the Great Sea heard of this meeting. They feared that the Ĭş′ra-el-īteş were about to break away from their rule, and they came up with an army to drive the Ĭş′ra-el-īteş away to their homes and keep them under the rule of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.

When the Ĭş′ra-el-īteş saw the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş coming against them they were greatly alarmed. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were men of war, with swords, and shields, and spears, and they were trained in fighting; while the men of Ĭş′ra-el had not seen war. It was more than twenty years since their fathers had fought the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş and twice had been beaten by them. They had neither weapons nor training, and they felt themselves helpless against their enemies. They looked to Săm′u-el, just as children would look to a father, and they said to him, “Do not cease praying and crying to the Lord for us, that he may save us from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.”

TOMB NEAR JÊ-RU̧′SÂ-LĔM CALLED “THE TOMB OF THE JUDGES.”

Then Săm′u-el took a lamb and offered it up to the Lord as a burnt-offering for the people, and he prayed mightily that God would help Ĭş′ra-el; and God heard his prayer.

Just as the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were rushing upon the helpless men of Ĭş′ra-el there came a great storm with rolling thunder and flashing lightning. Such storms do not come often in that land, and this was so heavy that it frightened the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. They threw down their spears and swords in sudden terror and ran away.

The men of Ĭş′ra-el picked up these arms and gathered such other weapons as they could find, and they followed the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş and killed many of them, and won a great victory over them. By this one stroke the power of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş was broken, and they lost their rule over Ĭş′ra-el. And it so happened that the place where Săm′u-el won this great victory was the very place where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had been beaten twice before, the place where the ark of God had been taken, as we read in the last Story. On the battlefield Săm′u-el set up a great stone to mark the place, and he gave it the name Ĕb′en-ē′zẽr, which means "The Stone of Help."

"For," said Săm′u-el, "this was the place where the Lord helped us."

After this defeat the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came no more into the land of Ĭş′ra-el in the years while Săm′u-el ruled as judge over the tribes. He was the fifteenth of the judges, and the last. He went throughout the land, and people everywhere brought to him their questions and their differences for Săm′u-el to decide, for they knew that he was a good man and would do justly between man and man. From each journey he came back to Rā′mah. There was his home, and there he built an altar to the Lord.

Săm′u-el lived many years, and ruled the people wisely, so that all trusted in him. He taught the Ĭş′ra-el-īteş to worship the Lord God, and to put away the idols, which so many of them had served. While Săm′u-el ruled there was peace in all the tribes, and no enemies came from the lands around to do harm to the Ĭş′ra-el-īteş. But the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were still very strong, and held rule over some parts of Ĭş′ra-el near their own land, although there was no war. Săm′u-el was not a man of war, like Gĭd′e-on or Jĕph′thah, but a man of peace, and his rule was quiet, though it was strong.

Story Eighteen

THE TALL MAN WHO WAS CHOSEN KING

I Samuel viii : 1, to x : 27.

WHEN Săm′u-el, the good man and the wise judge, grew old he made his sons judges in Ĭş′ra-el, to help him in the care of the people. But Săm′u-el's sons did not walk in his ways. They did not try always to do justly. When men brought matters before them to be decided, they would decide for the one who gave them money and not always for the one who was in the right.

The elders of all the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el came to Săm′u-el at his home in Rā′mah, and they said to him, "You are growing old, and your sons do not rule as well as you have ruled. All the lands around us have kings. Let us have a king also, and do you choose the king for us."

This was not pleasing to Săm′u-el, not because he wished to rule, but because the Lord God was their king, and he felt that for Ĭş′ra-el to have such a king as those who ruled the nations around them would be turning away from the Lord. Săm′u-el prayed to the Lord, and the Lord said to him, "Listen to the people in what they ask, for they have not turned away from you; they have turned away from me in asking for a king. Let them have a king, but tell them of the wrong that they are doing, and show them what trouble their king will bring upon them."

Then Săm′u-el called the elders of the people together, and he said to them, "If you have a king, as do the nations around, he will take your sons away from you, and will make some of them soldiers, and horsemen, and men to drive his chariots. He will take others of your sons to wait on him, to work in his fields, and to make his chariots and his weapons for war. Your king will take the best of your fields and your farms, and will give them to the men of his court who are around him. He will make your daughters cook for him, and make bread, and serve in his palace. He will take a part of your sheep, and your oxen, and your asses. You will find that he will be your master and you shall be his servants. The time shall come when you will cry out to the Lord on account of the king that you have chosen, and the Lord will not hear you." But the people would not follow Săm′u-el's advice. They said, "No, we will have a king to reign over us, so that we may be like other nations, and our king shall be our judge and shall lead us out to war."

It was God's will that Ĭş′ra-el should be a quiet, plain people, living alone in the mountains, serving the Lord and not trying to conquer other nations. But they wished to be a great people, to be strong in war and to have riches and power. And the Lord said to Săm′u-el, "Do as the people ask, and choose a king for them."

Then Săm′u-el sent the people to their homes, promising to find a king for them.

There was at that time in the tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn a young man named Sạul, the son of Kĭsh. He was a very large man and noble looking. From his shoulders he stood taller than any other man in Ĭş′ra-el. His father Kĭsh was a rich man, with wide fields and many flocks. Some asses that belonged to Kĭsh had strayed away, and Sạul went out with a servant to find them. While they were looking for the asses they came near to Rā′mah, where Săm′u-el lived. The servant said to Sạul, "There is in this city a man of God whom all men honor. They say that he can tell what is about to happen, for he is a seer. Let us go to him and give him a present. Perhaps he can tell us where to find the asses."

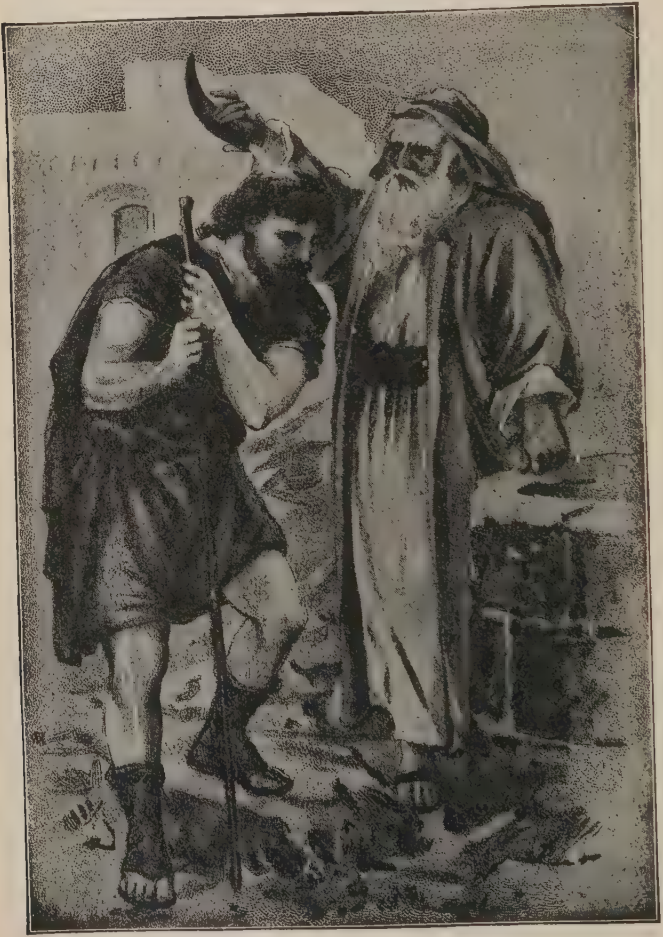
In those times a man to whom God made known his will was called a seer; in later times he was called a prophet.

So Sạul and his servant came to Rā′mah and asked for the seer; and while they were coming the seer, who was Săm′u-el, met them. On the day before the Lord had spoken to Săm′u-el, and had said:

"To-morrow, about this time, I will send you a man out of the tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn, and you shall make him the prince of my people, and he shall save my people from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş."

And when Săm′u-el saw this tall and noble-looking young man coming to meet him, he heard the Lord's voice, saying:

"This is the man of whom I spoke to you. He is the one that shall rule over my people."



SĂM'U-EL ANOINTS SA̧UL KING.

Then Sa̧ul came near to Săm'u-el, not knowing who he was, and he said, "Can you tell me where the seer's house is?" And Săm'u-el answered Sa̧ul, "I am the seer; come with me up to the hill. We are to have an offering and a feast there. As for the asses that were lost three days ago, do not be troubled about them, for they have been found. But on whom is the desire of all Ĭş'ra-el? Is it not on you and on your father's house?" Sa̧ul could not think what the seer meant in those last words. He said, "Is not my tribe of Bĕn'ja-mĭn the smallest of all the tribes? And is not my family the least of all the families in the tribe? Why do you say such things to me?"

But Săm'u-el led Sa̧ul and his servant into the best room at his house; at the table, where thirty had been invited, he gave Sa̧ul the best place, and he put before him the choicest of the meat, and he said, "This has been kept for you of all those invited to the feast."

That night Sa̤ul and his servant slept in the best room, which was on the roof of Săm′u-el's house. And the next morning Săm′u-el sent the servant on while he spoke with Sa̤ul alone. He brought out a vial of oil and poured it on Sa̤ul's head, and said:

"The Lord has anointed you to be prince over his land and his people."

Then he told Sa̤ul just what he would find on the way, where he would meet certain people, and what he must do. He said:

"When you come to the tomb where Rā′chel is buried, two men will meet you and will say to you, 'The asses for which you were looking have been found, and now your father is looking for you.' Then under an oak you will meet three men carrying three kids, three loaves of bread, and a skin-bottle full of wine; and these men will give you as a present two loaves of bread. Next you will meet a company of prophets, men full of God's Spirit, with instruments of music, and the Lord's Spirit shall come upon you and a new heart shall be given to you. All these things will show you that God is with you. Now go, and do whatever God tells you to do."

And it came just as Săm′u-el had said. These men met Sa̤ul, and when the prophets came near, singing and praising God, Sa̤ul joined them and also sang and praised the Lord. And in that hour a new spirit came to Sa̤ul. He was no more the farmer's son, for in him was the soul of a king.

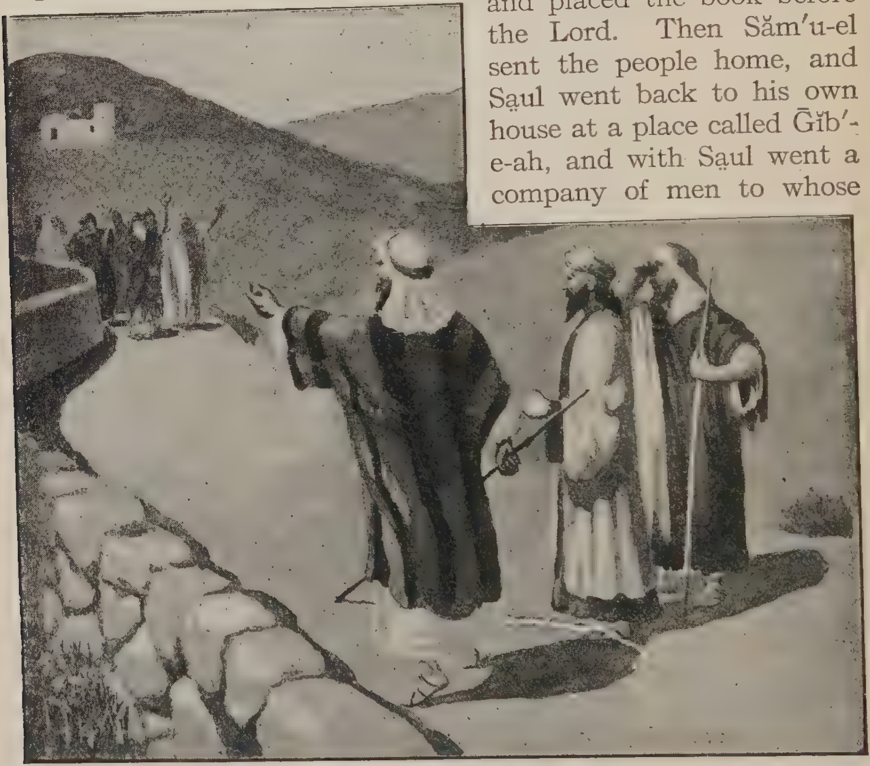
He came home, and told at home how he had met Săm′u-el, and that Săm′u-el said to him that the asses had been found. But he did not tell them that Săm′u-el had poured oil upon his head and said that he was to be the king of Ĭs̤′ra-el.

Then Săm′u-el called all the people to the meeting place at Mĭz′peh. And he told them that they had wished for a king, and God had chosen a king for them.

"Now," said Săm′u-el, "let the men of the tribes pass by, each tribe and each family by itself."

The people passed by Săm′u-el, and when the tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn came, out of all the tribes Bĕn′ja-mĭn was taken; out of Bĕn′ja-mĭn one family, and out of that family Sa̤ul's name was called. But Sa̤ul was not with his family; he had hidden away. They found him and brought him out; and when he stood among the people his head and shoulders rose above them all. And Săm′u-el said: "Look at the man whom the Lord has chosen! There is not another like him among all the people!" And all the people shouted "God save the king! Long live the king!"

Then Săm′u-el told the people what should be the laws for the king and for the people to obey. He wrote them down in a book, and placed the book before the Lord. Then Săm′u-el sent the people home, and Sạul went back to his own house at a place called Ḡĭb′-e-ah, and with Sạul went a company of men to whose hearts God had given a love for the king. So after three hundred years under the fifteen judges Ĭş′ra-el now had a king. But among the people there was some who were not pleased with the new king, because he was an unknown man from the farm. They said, "Can such a man as this save us?" They showed no respect to the king and in their hearts looked down upon him. But Sạul said nothing and showed his wisdom by appearing not to notice them.


A COMPANY OF PROPHETS MEET SẠUL.

Part Third

Stories of the Three Great Kings of Israel

Story One

HOW SAUL SAVED THE EYES OF THE MEN OF JABESH

I Samuel xi : 1, to xii : 25.

SA̤UL was now the king of all the twelve tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, but he did not at once in his manner of life set up the state of a king. He lived at home, and worked in the fields on his father's farm, just as he had always done.

One day, while Sa̤ul was plowing in the field with a yoke of oxen, a man came running with sad news. He said that the Ăm′mon-ītes, a fierce people living near the desert on the east, beyond the Jôr′dan, had come up against Jā′besh in Ḡĭl′e-ăd, led by their king, Nā′hăsh. The people in that city were too few to fight the Ăm′mon-ītes, and they said, "We will submit to your rule, if you will promise to spare our lives."

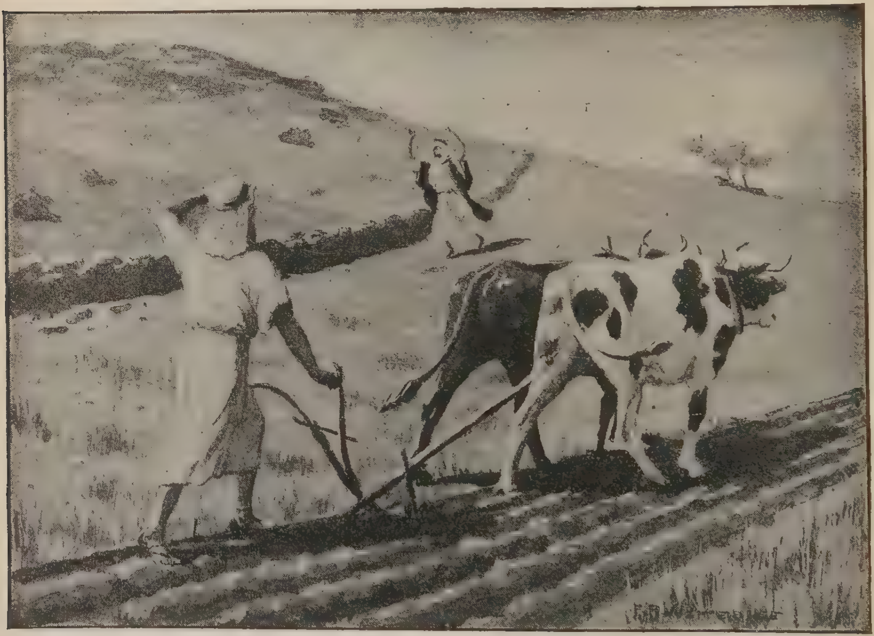
And Nā′hăsh, the king of the Ăm′mon-ītes, said to the people of Jā′besh, "You shall live, but within seven days I will come with my soldiers, and I will put out the right eye of every man in your city."

When a city was taken by its enemies in those times, such cruel deeds were common. Often all the people in it, young and old, were slain without mercy. The men of Jā′besh sent a messenger to go to Sa̤ul as swiftly as possible, and to tell him of the terrible fate that was hanging over them.

When Sa̤ul heard of it the spirit of a king rose within him. He killed the oxen that he was driving, cut them into twelve pieces, and sent swift messengers through all the land, to say to every fighting man in the twelve tribes, "Whoever will not come out after Sa̤ul and after Săm′u-el, so shall it be done to his oxen."

And the Lord gave to all the people the spirit of obedience to their king. At once a great army gathered at a place called Bē′zĕk, and he sent word to Jā′besh, saying, "To-morrow, by the time the sun is hot, you will be set free from all fear of the Ăm′-mon-ītes."

Sa̤ul and his men marched swiftly over the mountains of Bĕn′ja-mĭn and down into the Jôr′dan valley. They walked across the river where it was shallow and climbed the mountains of Gĭl′e-ăd. There they fell furiously upon the Ám′mon-ītes, early in the morning, killed many of them and scattered the rest, so that not even two of their men could be found together.



A MESSENGER BRINGS SA̤UL SAD NEWS.

We read in the last Story that when Sa̤ul was made king some men were not pleased and were unwilling to submit to him. Now that a great victory had bẹen won under Sa̤ul as leader, the people said with one voice, "Where are those men who would not honor our king? Bring them out, and let them be put to death."

But King Sa̤ul said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day, for to-day the Lord has set his people free from their enemies." Săm′u-el was with Saul, and he said, "Let us go to Gĭl′găl, where Jŏsh′u-ȧ encamped long ago when our fathers crossed the Jôr′dan; and there let us set up the kingdom again."

They came to Gĭl′găl, and offered sacrifices to the Lord and worshipped. There Săm′u-el gave up to the new king the rule over the land and spoke words of farewell. He said to the people:

"I have done as you asked me, and have given you a king. Your king stands before you now. I am old and gray-headed, and I have lived before you from my youth up to this day. Here I am; now, in the presence of the Lord and of his anointed king, is there any man whom I have wronged? Have I taken any man's ox or ass? Have I taken a present from any man to make me favor him as judge? If I have robbed any man, let him speak, and I will pay him all that I have taken."

And all the people said to Săm′u-el, "You have ruled justly, and have wronged no man, and have robbed no man."

And Săm′u-el said, "The Lord is witness, and his anointed, the king, is witness, that I have taken nothing from any man."

And all the people said, "He is witness."

Then Săm′u-el called to their minds all that God had done for his people since he had led them out of Ē′ġy̆pt; how he had saved them from their enemies, and had given them judges. And he said, "Now the Lord has set a king over you. If you will fear the Lord, and will serve him, then it shall be well with you. But if you disobey the Lord, then God will punish you, as he punished your fathers."

Then Săm′u-el called upon God, and God sent thunder and rain on that day, showing his power. The people were filled with fear, and they cried to Săm′u-el, "Pray to the Lord for us, for we have done wrong in asking for a king."

"Yes," said Săm′u-el, "you have done wrong; but if you from this time do right, and seek the Lord, God will not forsake you. He will forgive you and bless you. I will always pray for you, and will teach you the right way. But if you do evil, God will destroy you and your king. So fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart."

After this Săm′u-el went again to his own house at Rā′mah, and Saul ruled the people from Ḡĭb′e-ah, the home of his family.

Story Two

THE BRAVE YOUNG PRINCE

I Samuel xiii : 1, to xiv : 46.

THE people had hoped that when they should have a king to lead them in war they might break the power of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, who were still rulers over a large part of the land. But after Sạul had been king two years the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş seemed to be stronger than ever. They held many walled towns on the hills, and from these their warriors went out robbing the villages and taking away the crops from the farmers, so that the men of Ĭş′ra-el were kept very poor and in great fear.

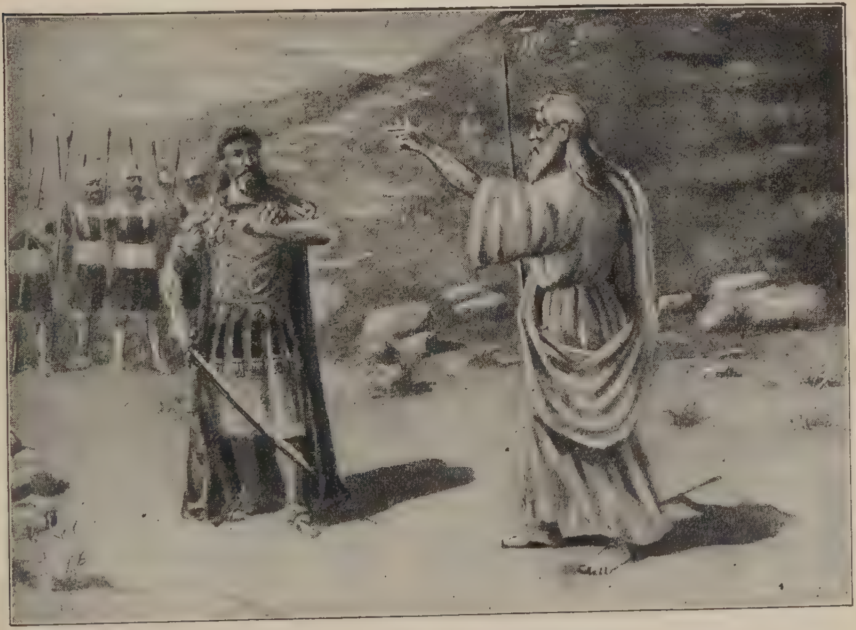
The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş would not allow the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to do any work in iron, in order to keep them from making swords and spears for themselves. When a man wished to have his iron plowshare sharpened or to have a new one made, he must go to the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş for the work. So when Sạul gathered an army, scarcely any of the men could find swords or spears, and Sạul and his son Jŏn′a-than were the only ones who wore suits of armor to protect them from the darts of the enemy.

Sạul gathered together a little army, of which a part was with him at Mĭch′mash, and another part with his son Jŏn′a-than at Ḡĭb′e-ah, five miles to the south. Jŏn′a-than, who was a very brave young man, led his band against the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş at Ḡē′bȧ, halfway between Ḡĭb′e-ah and Mĭch′mash, and took that place from them. The news of this fight went through the land, and the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came up the mountains with a great army, having chariots and horsemen. Sạul blew a trumpet and called the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes to the old camp at Ḡĭl′găl, down in the valley of the Jôr′dan; and many came, but they came trembling with fear of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.

Săm′u-el had told him not to march from Ḡĭl′găl until he should come to offer a sacrifice and to call upon God. But Săm′u-el delayed coming, and Sạul grew impatient, for he saw his men scattering. At last Sạul could wait no longer. He offered a sacrifice himself, though he was no priest. But while the offering was still burning on the altar Săm′u-el came. He said to Sạul, "What is this that you have donẹ?"

And Sạul answered, "I saw that my men were scattering, and I feared that the enemy might come down upon me, so I offered the sacrifice myself, since you were not here."

"You have done wrong," said Săm′u-el. "You have not kept God's commands. If you had obeyed and trusted the Lord, he would have kept you in safety. But now God will find some other man who will do his will, a man after his own heạrt, and God will in his own time take the kingdom from you and give it to him."



"YOU HAVE NOT KEPT GOD'S COMMAND."

And Săm′u-el left the camp and went away, leaving Sạul. Sạul led his men, only six hundred, up the mountains to Ḡē′bȧ, the place which Jŏn′a-than had taken. Across the valley near Mĭch′-mash was the host of the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş in plain sight. One morning

Jŏn′a-than and the young man who waited on him went down the hill toward the camp of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. This servant of Jŏn′a-than was called his armor-bearer, because he carried Jŏn′a-than's shield, and sword, and spear, to have them ready when needed.

Jŏn′a-than could see the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş just across the valley. He said, "If the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş say to us, 'Come over,' we will go and fight them, even though we two are alone, for we will take it as a sign that God will help us."

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş saw the two Ĭş′ra-el-ītes standing on a rock across the valley, and they called to them, "Come over here, and we will show you something."

Then Jŏn′a-than said to his armor-bearer, "Come on, for the Lord has given them into our hand."

Then they crossed the valley and came suddenly up to the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and struck them down right and left, without giving them a moment. Some fell down, but others ran away, and soon, as their fellow-soldiers saw them running, they, too, became frightened, and everybody began to run to and fro. Some fought the men who were running away, and before many minutes the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes on the hill across the valley could see the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş fighting and killing each other, the men running in every direction and their army melting away.

Then Sạul and his men came across the valley and joined in the fight; and other Ĭş′ra-el-ītes who were in the camp of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and under their control, rose against them; and the tribes near at hand came forth and pursued them as they fled. So on that day a great victory was won over the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş.

But a great mistake was made by King Sạul on the day of the victory. He feared that his men would turn aside from following the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş to seize the spoil in their camp, and when the battle began King Sạul said, "Let the curse of God light on any man who takes food until the evening. Whoever takes any food before the sun goes down shall die, so that there may be no delay in destroying our enemies."

So on that day no man ate any food until it was evening, and they were faint and feeble from hunger. They were so worn out that they could not chase the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş further, and many of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş escaped. That afternoon, as they were driving the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş through a forest, they found honey on the trees; but no man tasted it, because of Sạul's oath before the Lord, that whoever took a mouthful of food should be put to death.

But Jŏn′a-than had not heard of his father's command. He took some honey and was made stronger by it. They said to Jŏn′a-than, "Your father commanded all the people not to take any food until the sun goes down, saying, 'May the curse of God come upon any one who eats anything until the evening.'" When Jŏn′a-than heard of his father's word, he said, "My father has given us all great trouble; for if the men could have taken some food they would have been stronger to fight and to kill their enemies."

On that night Sạul found that Jŏn′a-than had broken his command, though he knew it not at the time. He said, "I have taken an oath before the Lord, and now, Jŏn′a-than, you must die, though you are my own son."

But the people would not allow Jŏn′a-than to be put to death, even to keep Sạul's oath. They said, "Shall Jŏn′a-than die, after he has done such a great deed, and won the victory, and saved the people? Not a hair of his head shall fall, for he has done God's work this day!"

And they rescued Jŏn′a-than from the hand of the king and set him free. A great victory had been won, but Sạul had already shown that he was not fit to rule, because he was too hasty in his acts and his words, and because he was not careful to obey God's command.

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneș after this battle stayed for a time in their own land beside the Great Sea, and did not trouble the Ĭș′ra-el-ītes upon the mountains.

Story Three

SAUL'S GREAT SIN AND HIS GREAT LOSS

I Samuel xv : 1 to 35.

AFTER the great victory over the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, Sạul led his men against the enemies of Ĭş′ra-el on every side of the land. He drove back the Mō′ab-ītes to their country east of the Dead Sea, and the Ăm′mon-ītes to the desert regions across the Jôr′dan. He fought the Ē′dom-ītes on the south and the kings of Zō′bah in the far north. For a time the land of Ĭş′ra-el was free from its oppressors.

On the south of the land, in the desert where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had journeyed for forty years, were living the wild and wandering Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes, a people who had sought to harm the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes soon after they came out of Ē′ġy̆pt, and had killed many of their people when they were helpless on their journey. For this God had said that Ĭş′ra-el should have war against the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes until they were destroyed.

The time had now come for God's word against the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes to be fulfilled, and Săm′u-el said to Sạul, "Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, go down and make war against the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes, and destroy them utterly."

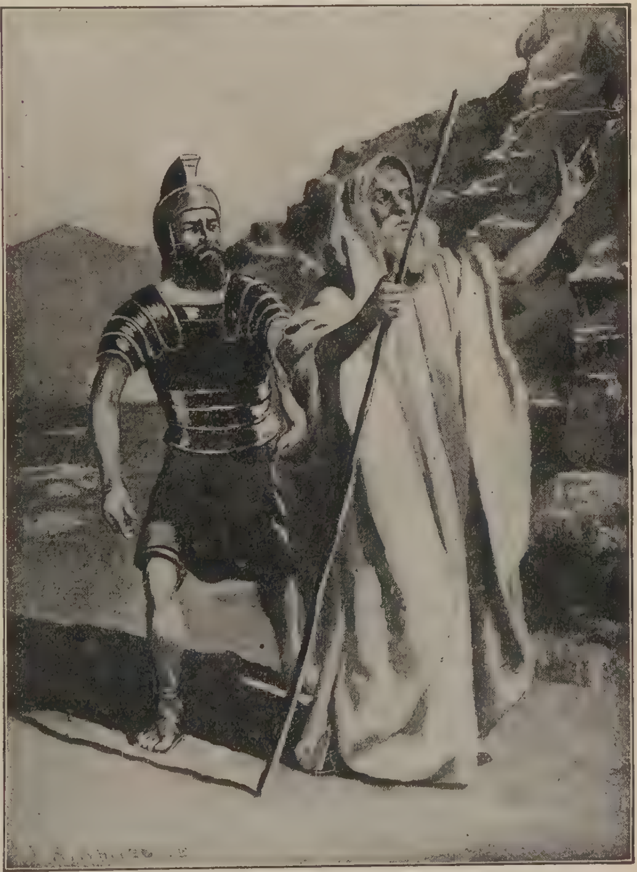
Then Sạul called out the men of war in all the tribes, and they marched southward into the desert where many years before their fathers had lived for forty years. There Sạul made war on the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes, and took their city and destroyed it. But he did not do what God had commanded him. He brought Ā′găg, the king of the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes, and many of his people as prisoners, and a great train of their sheep and oxen, intending to keep them.

Then the word of the Lord came to Săm′u-el, saying, "It would have been better never to have chosen Sạul as king, for he does not obey my commands."

All that night Săm′u-el prayed to the Lord, and the next day he went to meet Sạul. When Sạul saw him, he said, "May the blessing of the Lord be upon you. I have done what the Lord commanded me to do."

Then said Săm′u-el, "If you have obeyed God's command and destroyed all the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes and all that they possessed, what is the meaning of this bleating of the sheep and the bellowing of the oxen which I hear?"

"They have brought them from the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes," answered Saul, "for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to offer in sacrifice to the Lord your God. All the rest we have utterly destroyed." This he said to excuse his wrongdoing and to put the blame for his disobedience to God's command on the people.



SĂM′U-EL TURNS AWAY FROM SAUL.

Then Săm′u-el said, "I will tell you what God said to me last night. When you were humble in your own sight, God chose you to be king over Ĭş′ra-el. He sent you on a long journey to the southward into the desert and said to you, 'Go and utterly destroy the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes and leave nothing of them.' Why did you not obey God's word but did seize their oxen and sheep and save many of their people alive, disobeying God's voice?"

And Sa̤ul said, "I have done as God commanded, and have destroyed the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes. But the people took some things that should have been destroyed, to offer in sacrifice to the Lord."

And Săm′u-el said, "Is the Lord as well pleased with offerings as he is with obeying his words? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen to God's word is more precious than to place offerings on his altar. To disobey God's word is as evil as to worship idols. You have refused to obey the voice of the Lord, and the Lord will take away your kingdom from you."

Sa̤ul saw now how great was the harm that he had done, and he said, "I have sinned in not obeying God's word; but I was afraid of the people, and yielded to them. Now forgive my sin. Come with me, and I will worship the Lord."

"No," said Săm′u-el, "I will not go with you, for God will refuse you as king."

As Săm′u-el turned away, Sa̤ul took hold of his garment, and it tore in his hand. And Săm′u-el said, "Even so has God torn the kingdom away from you; and he will give it to a man that is better than you are. And God is not like a man, to say one thing and do another. What God has said shall surely come to pass."

Sa̤ul begged Săm′u-el so hard not to leave him, but to give him honor in presence of the people, that Săm′u-el went with Sa̤ul and Sa̤ul worshipped the Lord with Săm′u-el.

After this Săm′u-el went to his house at Rā′mah, and he never again met Sa̤ul as long as he lived; but he mourned and wept for Sa̤ul, because he had disobeyed the Lord, and the Lord had rejected him as king.

Story Four

THE SHEPHERD BOY OF BETHLEHEM

I Samuel xvi : 1 to 23.

WHEN Săm′u-el told Sa̤ul that the Lord would take away the kingdom from him, he did not mean that Sa̤ul should lose the kingdom at once. He was no longer God's king; and as soon as the right man in God's sight should be found, and should be trained for his duty as king, then God would take away Sa̤ul's power, and would give it to the man whom God had chosen. But it was many years before all this came to pass.

Săm′u-el, who had helped in choosing Sa̤ul as king, still loved him, and he felt very sorry to find Sa̤ul disobeying God's commands. He wept much, and mourned for Sa̤ul. But the Lord said to Săm′u-el:

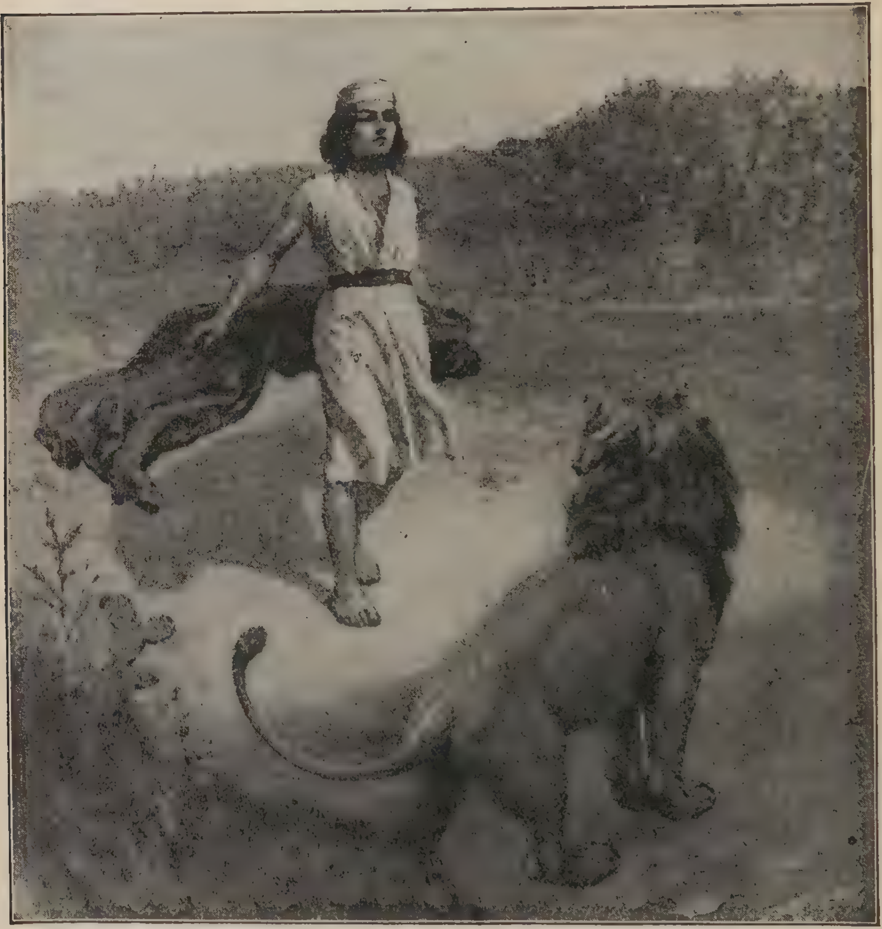
"Do not weep and mourn any longer over Sa̤ul, for I have refused him as king. Fill the horn with oil, and go to Běth′=lě-hěm in Jū′dah. There find a man named Jěs′se, for I have chosen a king among his sons."

But Săm′u-el knew that Sa̤ul would be very angry, if he should learn that Săm′u-el had named any other man as king in his place. He said to the Lord, "How can I go? If Sa̤ul hears of it, he will kill me."

Then the Lord said to Săm′u-el, "Take a young cow with you; and tell the people that you have come to make an offering to the Lord. And call Jěs′se and his sons to the sacrifice. I will tell you what to do; and you shall anoint the one whom I name to you."

Săm′u-el went over the mountains southward from Rā′mah to Běth′=lě-hěm, about ten miles, leading a cow. The rulers of the town were alarmed at his coming, for they feared that he had come to judge the people for some evil-doing. But Săm′u-el said, "I have come in peace to make an offering and to hold a feast to the Lord. Make yourselves ready and come to the sacrifice."

And he invited Jĕs'se and his sons to the service. When they had made themselves ready they came before Săm'u-el. He looked at the sons of Jĕs'se very closely. The oldest was named Ē-lī'ab; and he was so tall and noble-looking that Săm'u-el thought:



THE BOY DĀ'VID MEETING THE LION.

"Surely this young man must be the one whom God has chosen." But the Lord said to Săm'u-el:

"Do not look on his face, nor on the height of his body; for I have not chosen him. Man judges by the outward looks, but God looks at the heart."

Then Jĕs′se's second son, named Shăm′mah, passed by. And the Lord said, "I have not chosen this one." Seven young men came, and Săm′u-el said:

"None of these is the man whom God has chosen. Are these all your children?"

"There is one more," said Jĕs′se. "The youngest of all. He is a boy in the field caring for the sheep."

And Săm′u-el said:

"Send for him; for we will not sit down until he comes." So after a time the youngest son was brought in. His name was Dā′vid, a word that means "darling," and he was a beautiful boy, perhaps fifteen years old, with fresh cheeks and bright eyes.

As soon as the young Dā′vid came, the Lord said to Săm′u-el:

"Arise; anoint him, for this is the one whom I have chosen."

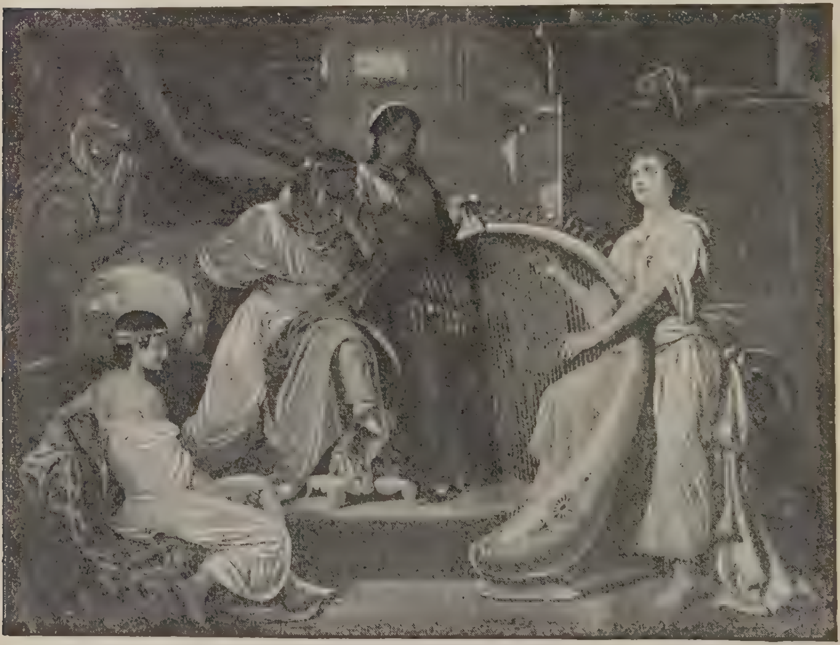
Then Săm′u-el poured oil on Dā′vid's head, in the presence of all his brothers. But no one knew at that time the anointing to mean that Dā′vid was to be the king. Perhaps he thought that Dā′vid was chosen to be a prophet like Săm′u-el.

From that time the Spirit of the Lord came upon Dā′vid; and he began to show signs of coming greatness. He went back to his sheep on the hillsides around Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm, but God was with him. Dā′vid grew up strong and brave; not afraid of the wild beasts which prowled around and tried to carry away his sheep. More than once he fought with lions and bears, and killed them, when they seized the lambs of his flock. And Dā′vid, alone all day, practised throwing stones in a sling, until he could strike exactly the place for which he aimed. When he swung his sling, he knew that the stone would go to the very spot at which he was throwing it.

And, young as he was, Dā′vid thought of God, and prayed to God. And God talked with Dā′vid, and showed to Dā′vid his will. And Dā′vid was more than a shepherd and a fighter of wild beasts. He played upon the harp, and made music, and sang songs about the goodness of God to his people.

One of these songs of Dā′vid we have all heard, and perhaps know so well that we can repeat it. It is called "The Shepherd Psalm," and begins with the words:

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
I will fear no evil; for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."



DĀ'VID PLAYS BEFORE SẠUL.

Some think that Dā'vid made this Psalm, while he was himself a shepherd, tending his flock. But it seems rather like the thoughts of a man than of a boy; and it is more likely that long after those days, when Dā'vid was a king, and remembered his youth, and his flock in the fields, that he saw how God had led him, just as he had led his sheep; and then he wrote this Psalm.

But while the Spirit of God came to Dā'vid among his sheep, that Spirit left King Sa̤ul, because he no longer obeyed God's words. Then Sa̤ul became very unhappy, and gloomy in his feelings. There were times when he seemed to lose his mind, and a madness would come upon him; and at almost all times Sa̤ul was sad and full of trouble, because he was no more at peace with God.

The servants around Sa̤ul noticed that when some one played on the harp and sang, Sa̤ul's gloom and trouble passed away, and he became cheerful. At one time Sa̤ul said:

"Find some one who can play well, and bring him to me. Let me listen to music; for it drives away my sadness."

One of the young men said:

"I have seen a young man, a son of Jĕs′se in Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm, who can play well. He is handsome in his looks, and agreeable in talking. Then I have heard that he is a brave young man, who can fight as well as he can play; and the Lord is with him."

Then Sa̤ul sent a message to Jĕs′se, Dā′vid's father. He said:

"Send me your son Dā′vid, who is with the sheep. Let him come and play before me."

Then Dā′vid came to Sa̤ul, bringing with him a present for the king from Jĕs′se. When Sa̤ul saw him, he loved him, as did everybody who saw the young Dā′vid. And Dā′vid played on the harp, and sang before Sa̤ul. And Dā′vid's music cheered Sa̤ul's heart, and drove away his sad feelings.

Sa̤ul liked Dā′vid so well that he made him his armor-bearer; and Dā′vid carried the shield and spear and sword for Sa̤ul when the king was before his army. But Sa̤ul did not know that Dā′vid had been anointed by Săm′u-el. If he had known it, he would have been very jealous of Dā′vid.

After a time Sa̤ul seemed well, and Dā′vid left him, to be a shepherd once more at Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm.

Story Five

THE SHEPHERD BOY'S FIGHT WITH THE GIANT

I Samuel xvii : 1 to 54.

ALL through the reign of Sa̤ul there was constant war with the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, who lived upon the lowlands west of Ĭş′ra-el. At one time, when Dā′vid was still with his sheep, a few years after he had been anointed by Săm′u-el, the camp of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were set against each other on opposite sides of the valley of Ē′lah ready to fight each other. In the army of Ĭş′ra-el were the three oldest brothers of Dā′vid, who were soldiers under King Sa̤ul.

Every day a giant came out of the camp of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and dared some one to come from the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes' camp and fight with him. The giant's name was Gô-lī′ath. He was nine feet high; and he wore armor from head to foot, and carried a spear twice as long and as heavy as any other man could hold; and his shield-bearer walked before him. He came every day and called out across the little valley:

"I am a Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne, and you are servants of Sa̤ul. Now choose one of your men, and let him come out and fight with me. If I kill him, then you shall submit to us; and if he kills me, then we will give up to you. Come, now, send out your man!"

But no man in the army, not even King Sa̤ul, dared to go out and fight with the giant. The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were mostly farmers and shepherds, and were not fond of war, as were the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş. Then, too, very few of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had swords and spears, except such rude weapons as they could make out of their farming tools. Forty days the camps stood against each other, and the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne giant continued his call.

One day old Jĕs′se, the father of Dā′vid, sent Dā′vid from Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm to visit his three brothers in the army. Dā′vid came, spoke to his brothers, and gave them a present from his father.

While he was talking with them, Gō-lī′ath, the giant, came out as before in front of the camp, calling for some one to fight with him.

The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes said to one another, "If any man will go out and kill this Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne, the king will give him a great reward and a high rank; and the king's daughter shall be his wife."

And Dā′vid said, "Who is this man that speaks in this proud manner against the armies of the living God? Why does not some one go out and kill him?"

Dā′vid's brother Ē-lī′ab said to him, "What are you doing here, leaving your sheep in the field? I know that you have come down just to see the battle."

But Dā′vid did not care for his brother's angry words. He was thinking out some way to kill this boasting giant. While all the men were in terror, this boy thought of a plan. He believed that he knew how to bring down the big warrior, with all his armor. Finally, Dā′vid said:

"If no one else will go, I will go out and fight with this enemy of the Lord's people."

They brought Dā′vid before King Sa̤ul. Some years had passed since Sa̤ul had met Dā′vid, and he had grown from a boy to a man, so that Sa̤ul did not know him as the shepherd who had played on the harp before him in other days.

Sa̤ul said to Dā′vid, "You cannot fight with this giant. You are very young; and he is a man of war, trained from his youth."

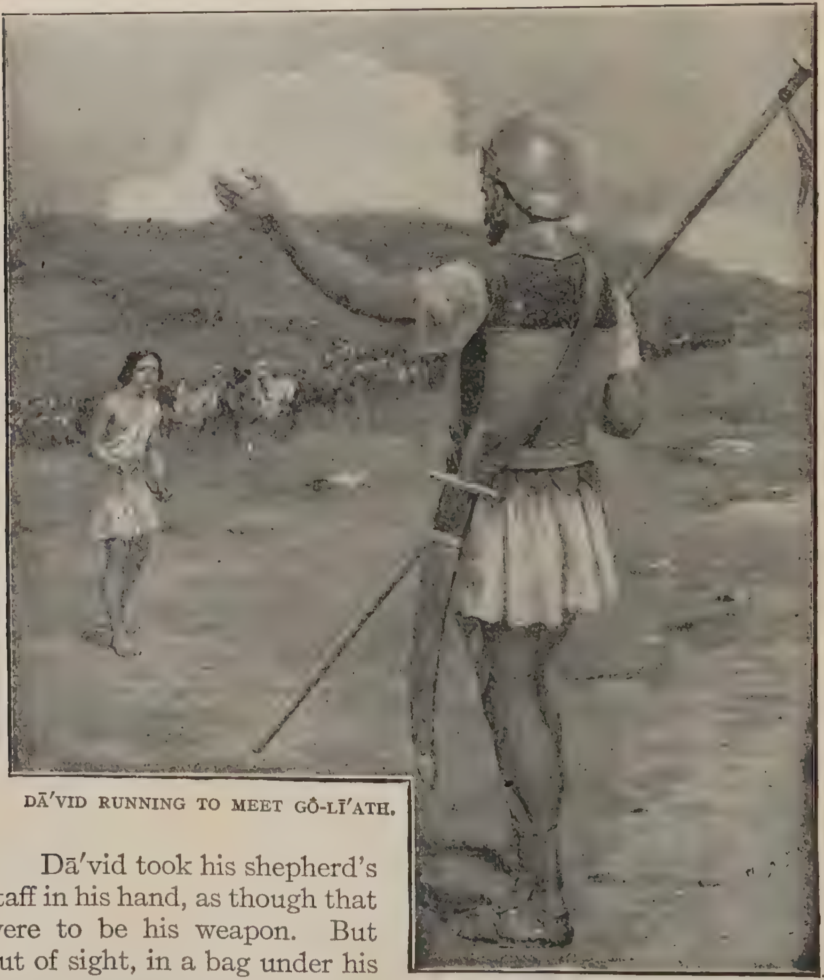
And Dā′vid answered King Sa̤ul, "I am only a shepherd, but I have fought with lions and bears, when they have tried to steal my sheep. And I am not afraid to fight with this Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne. The Lord saved me from the lion's jaw and the bear's paw, and he will save me from this enemy, for I shall fight for the Lord and his people."

Then Sa̤ul put his own armor on Dā′vid, a helmet on his head, and a coat of mail on his body, and a sword at his waist. But Sa̤ul was almost a giant, and his armor was far too large for Dā′vid Dā′vid said:

"I am not used to fighting with such weapons as these. Let me fight in my own way."

So Dā′vid took off Sa̤ul's armor; for Dā′vid's plan to fight the giant did not need an armor, but did need a quick eye, a clear head, a sure aim, and a bold heart; and all these Dā′vid had, for God had given them to him. Dā′vid's plan was very wise. It was to make

Gô-lī′ath think that his enemy was too weak for him to be on his guard against him; and while so far away that the giant could not reach him with sword or spear, to strike him down with a weapon which the giant would not expect, and would not be prepared for.



DĀ′VID RUNNING TO MEET GÔ-LĪ′ATH.

Dā′vid took his shepherd's staff in his hand, as though that were to be his weapon. But out of sight, in a bag under his mantle, he had five smooth stones carefully chosen, and a sling,—the weapon he knew how to use. Then he came out to meet the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne. The giant looked down on the youth and despised him, and laughed at him.

"Am I a dog," he said, "that this boy comes to me with a staff! I will give his body to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field."

And the Phĭ-lĭs′tīne cursed Dā′vid by the gods of his people. And Dā′vid answered him:

"You come against me with a sword and a spear and a dart; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Ĭş′ra-el. This day will the Lord give you into my hand; I will strike you down, and take off your head; and the hosts of the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş shall be dead bodies, to be eaten by the birds and the beasts; so that all may know that there is a God in Ĭş′ra-el, and that he can save in other ways besides with sword and spear."

And Dā′vid ran toward the Phĭ-lĭs′tīne, as if to fight him with his shepherd's staff. But when he was just near enough for a good aim he took out his sling, and hurled a stone aimed at the giant's forehead. Dā′vid's aim was good, the stone struck the Phĭ-lĭs′tīne in his forehead. It stunned him, and he fell to the ground.

While the two armies stood wondering, and scarcely knowing what had caused the giant to fall so suddenly, Dā′vid ran forward, drew out the giant's own sword, and cut off his head.

Then the Phĭ-lĭs′tīneş knew that their great warrior in whom they trusted was dead. They turned to fly back to their own land; and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes followed after them, and killed them by the hundred and thousand, even to the gates of their own city of Găth.

So in that day Dā′vid won a great victory; and stood before all the land as the one who had saved his people from their enemies.

Story Six

THE LITTLE BOY LOOKING FOR THE ARROWS

I Samuel xvii : 55, to xx : 42.

AFTER Dā′vid had slain the giant he was brought before King Sa̤ul, still holding the giant's head. Sa̤ul did not remember in this bold fighting man the boy who a few years before had played in his presence. He took him into his own house, and made him an officer among his soldiers. Dā′vid was as wise and as brave in the army as he had been when facing the giant, and very soon he was in command of a thousand men. All the men loved him, both in Sa̤ul's court and in his camp, for Dā′vid had the spirit that drew all hearts toward him.

When Dā′vid was returning from his battle with the Phĭ-lĭs′-tĭneş the women of Ĭş′ra-el came to meet him out of the cities, with instruments of music, singing and dancing, and they sang:

"Sa̤ul has slain his thousands,
And Dā′vid his ten thousands."

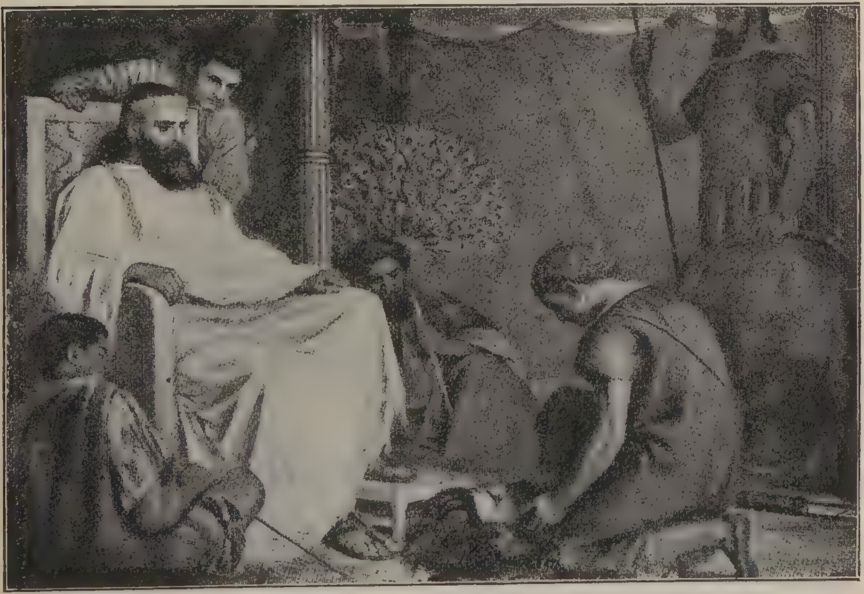
This made Sa̤ul very angry, for he was jealous and suspicious in his spirit. He thought constantly of Săm′u-el's words, that God would take the kingdom from him and would give it to one who was more worthy of it. He began to think that perhaps this young man, who had come in a single day to greatness before the people, might try to make himself king.

His former feeling of unhappiness again came over Sa̤ul. He raved in his house, talking as a man talks who is crazed. By this time they all knew that Dā′vid was a musician, and they called him again to play on his harp and to sing before the troubled king. But now, in his madness, Sa̤ul would not listen to Dā′vid's voice. Twice he threw his spear at him; but each time Dā′vid leaped aside, and the spear went into the wall of the house.

Sa̤ul was afraid of Dā′vid, for he saw that the Lord was with Dā′vid, as the Lord was no longer with himself. He would have killed Dā′vid, but did not dare kill him, because everybody loved Dā′vid. Sa̤ul said to himself, "Though I cannot kill him myself, I will have him killed by the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş."

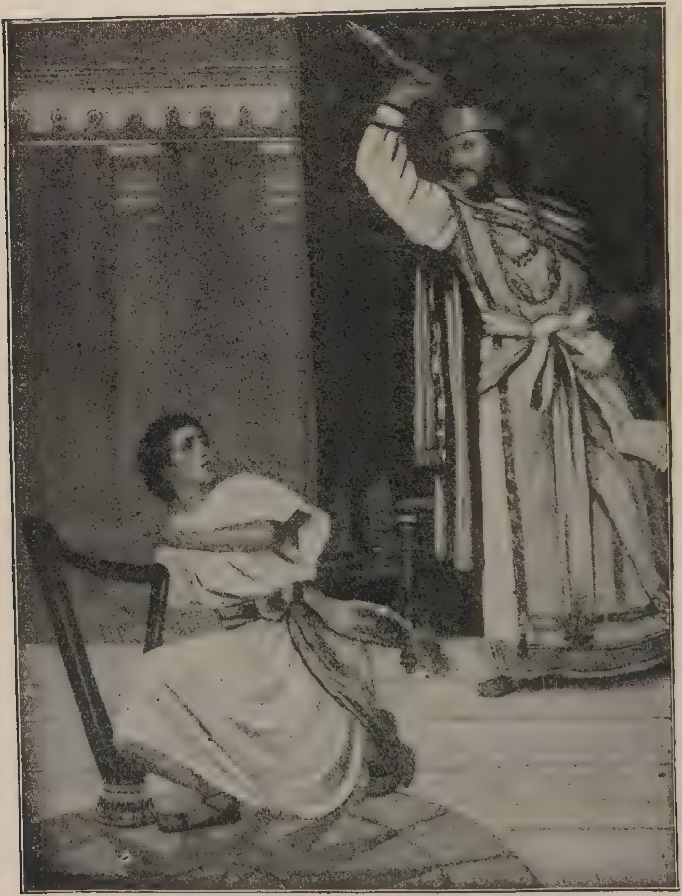
And he sent Dā′vid out on dangerous errands of war; but Dā′vid came home in safety, all the greater and the more beloved after each victory. Sa̤ul said, "I will give you̥ my daughter Mē′răb for your wife if you will fight the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş for me."

Dā′vid fought the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş; but when he came home from the war he found that Mē′răb, who had been promised to him, had been given as wife to another man. Sa̤ul had another daughter, named Mī′chal. She loved Dā′vid, and showed her love for him. Then Sa̤ul sent word to Dā′vid, saying, "You shall have Mī′chal, my daughter, for your wife when you have killed a hundred Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş."



DĀ′VID BROUGHT WITH THE GIANT'S HEAD BEFORE SA̤UL.

Then Dā′vid went out and fought the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and killed two hundred of them; and they brought the word to Sa̤ul. Then Sa̤ul gave him his daughter Mī′chal as his wife; but he was all the more afraid of Dā′vid as he saw him growing in power and drawing nearer to the throne of the kingdom.

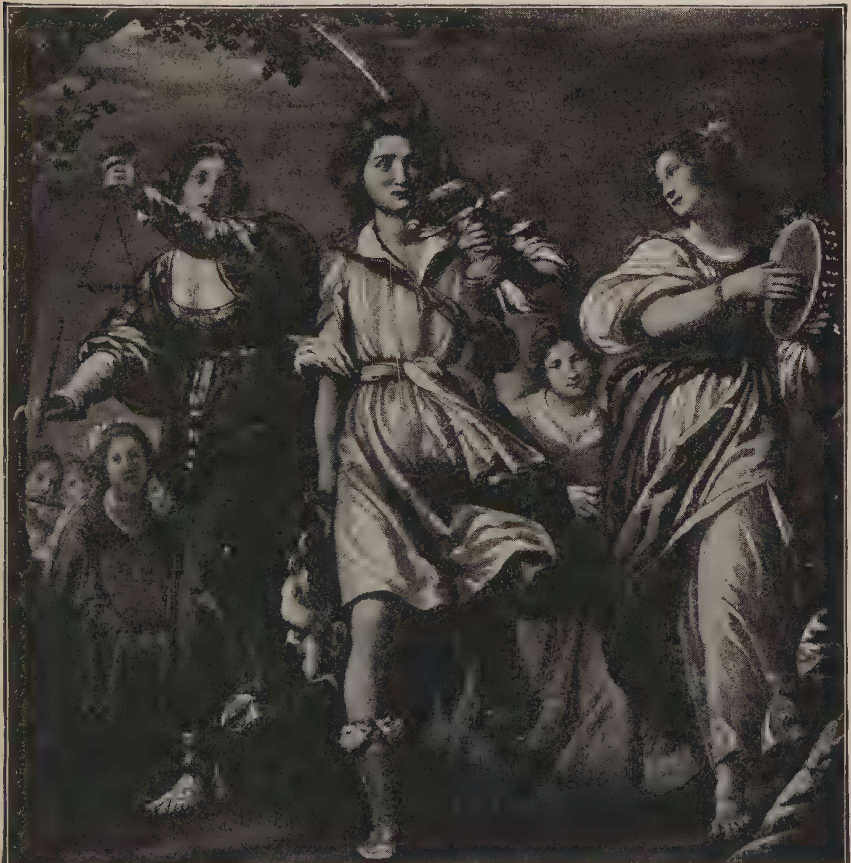


SAUL THROWS HIS SPEAR AT DĀ′VID.

But if Sạul hated Dā′vid, Sạul's son, Jŏn′a-than, loved Dā′vid with all his heart. This was the brave young warrior of whom we read in Story Two of this Part, who with his armor-bearer went out alone to fight the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne army. Jŏn′a-than saw Dā′vid's courage and nobility of soul, and loved him with all his heart. He took off his own royal robe, and his sword, and his bow, and gave them all to Dā′vid. It grieved Jŏn′a-than greatly that his father, Sạul, was so jealous of Dā′vid. He spoke to his father, and said: "Let not the king do harm to Dā′vid; for Dā′vid has been faithful to the king, and he has done great things for the kingdom. He took his life in his hand, and killed the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne, and won a great victory for the Lord and for the people. Why should you seek to kill an innocent man?"

For the time Sa̤ul listened to Jŏn′a-than, and said, "As the Lord lives, Dā′vid shall not be put to death."

And again Dā′vid sat at the king's table, among the princes; and when Sa̤ul was troubled again Dā′vid played on his harp and sang before him. But once more Sa̤ul's jealous anger arose, and he threw his spear at Dā′vid. Dā′vid was watchful and quick. He leaped aside, and, as before, the spear fastened into the wall.



THE WOMEN MEETING DĀ′VID WITH DANCING AND SINGING.

Sa̤ul sent men to Dā′vid's house to seize him; but Mī′chal, Sa̤ul's daughter, who was Dā′vid's wife, let Dā′vid down out of the window, so that he escaped. She placed an image on Dā′vid's bed and covered it with the bed-clothes. When the men came, she said, "Dā'vid is ill in the bed, and cannot go."

They brought the word to Sa̤ul, and he said, "Bring him to me in the bed, just as he is."

When the image was found in Dā'vid's bed, Dā'vid was in a safe place, far away. Dā'vid went to Săm'u-el at Rā'mah, and stayed with him among the men who were prophets worshipping God and singing and speaking God's word. Sa̤ul heard that Dā'vid was there, and sent men to take him. But when these men came and saw Săm'u-el and the prophets praising God and praying, the same spirit came on them, and they began to praise and to pray. Sa̤ul sent other men, but these also, when they came among the prophets, felt the same power, and joined in the worship.

Finally, Sa̤ul said, "If no other man will bring Dā'vid to me, I will go myself and take him."

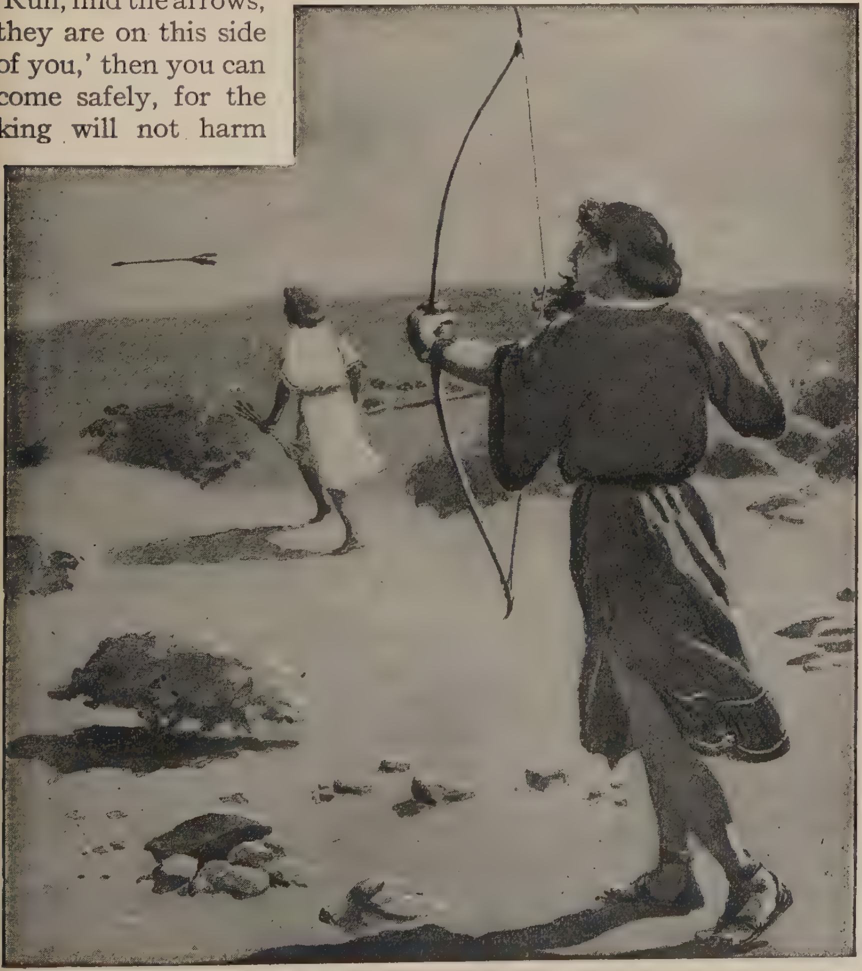
And Sa̤ul went to Rā'mah; but when he came near to the company of the worshippers, praising God, and praying, and preaching, the same spirit came on Sa̤ul. He, too, began to join in the songs and the prayers, and stayed there all that day and that night, worshipping God very earnestly. When the next day he went again to his home in Ḡĭb'e-ah, his feeling was changed for the time, and he was again friendly to Dā'vid.

But Dā'vid knew that Sa̤ul was at heart his bitter enemy and would kill him if he could as soon as his madness came upon him. He met Jŏn'a-than out in the field away from the place. Jŏn'a-than said to Dā'vid:

"Stay away from the king's table for a few days, and I will find out how he feels toward you, and will tell you. Perhaps even now my father may become your friend. But if he is to be your enemy, I know that the Lord is with you, and that Sa̤ul will not succeed against you. Promise me that as long as you live you will be kind to me, and not only to me while I live, but to my children after me."

Jŏn'a-than believed, as many others believed, that Dā'vid would yet become the king of Ĭs̤'ra-el, and he was willing to give up to Dā'vid his right to be king, such was his great love for him. That day a promise was made between Jŏn'a-than and Dā'vid, that they and their children, and those who should come after them, should be friends forever.

Jŏn′a-than said to Dā′vid, "I will find how my father feels toward you, and will bring you word. After three days I will be here with my bow and arrows, and I will send a little boy out near your place of hiding, and I will shoot three arrows. If I say to the boy, 'Run, find the arrows, they are on this side of you,' then you can come safely, for the king will not harm you. But if I call out to the boy, 'The arrows are away beyond you,' that will mean that there is danger, and you must hide from the king."



JŎN′A-THAN SHOOTS THE ARROW.

So Dā′vid stayed away from Sạul's table for two days. At first Sạul said nothing of his absence, but at last he said:

"Why has not the son of Jĕs′se come to meals yesterday and to-day?"

And Jŏn′a-than said, "Dā′vid asked leave of me to go to his home at Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm and visit his oldest brother."

Then Sạul was very angry. He cried out, "You are a disobedient son! Why have you chosen this enemy of mine as your best friend? Do you not know that as long as he is alive you can never be king? Send after him, and let him be brought to me, for he shall surely die!"

Sạul was so fierce in his anger that he threw his spear at his own son Jŏn′a-than. Jŏn′a-than rose up from the table, so anxious for his friend Dā′vid that he could eat nothing. The next day, at the hour agreed upon, Jŏn′a-than went out into the field with a little boy. He said to the boy, "Run out yonder, and be ready to find the arrows that I shoot."

And as the boy was running Jŏn′a-than shot arrows beyond him, and he called out, "The arrows are away beyond you; run quickly and find them."

The boy ran and found the arrows, and brought them to Jŏn′a-than. He gave the bow and arrows to the boy, saying to him, "Take them back to the city. I will stay here a while."

And as soon as the boy was out of sight Dā′vid came from his hiding-place and ran to Jŏn′a-than. They fell into each other's arms and kissed each other again and again, and wept together. For Dā′vid knew now that he must no longer hope to be safe in Sạul's hands. He must leave home, and wife, and friends, and his father's house, and hide wherever he could from the hate of King Sạul.

Jŏn′a-than said to him, "Go in peace; for we have sworn together saying, 'The Lord shall be between you and me, and between your children and my children forever.'"

Then Jŏn′a-than went again to his father's palace, and Dā′vid went out to find a hiding-place.

Story Seven

WHERE DAVID FOUND THE GIANT'S SWORD

I Samuel xxi : 1, to xxii : 23.

FROM his meeting with Jŏn′a-than, Dā′vid went forth to be a wanderer, having no home as long as Sa̤ul lived. He went away so suddenly that he was without either bread to eat, or a sword for defence. On his way he called at a little city called Nŏb, where the Tabernacle was then standing, although the holy ark was still in another place by itself. The chief priest, Ȧ-hĭm′e-lĕch, was surprised to see Dā′vid coming alone. Dā′vid said to him, "The king has sent me upon an errand of which no one is to be told, and my men are to meet me in a secret place. Can you give me a few loaves of bread?"

"There is no bread here," said the priest, "except the holy bread from the table in the holy house. The priests have just taken it away to put new bread in its place."

"Let me have that bread," said Dā′vid, "for we are the Lord's, and are holy."

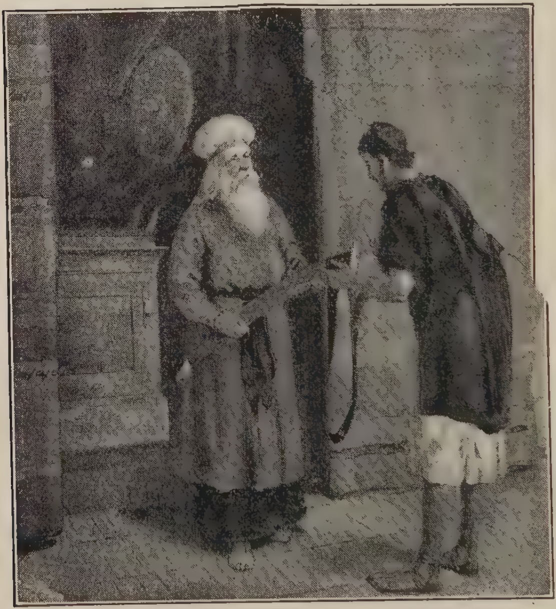
So the priest gave Dā′vid the holy bread, which was to be eaten by the priests alone. Dā′vid said also, "Have you a spear, or a sword, which I can take with me? The king's errand was so sudden that I had no time to bring my weapons."

"There is no sword here," said the priest, "except the sword of Gȯ-lī′ath of Găth, whom you slew in the valley of Ē′lah. It is wrapped in a cloth, in the closet with the priest's robe. If you wish that sword, you can have it."

"There is no sword like that," said Dā′vid; "give it to me." So Dā′vid took the giant's sword, and five loaves of bread, and went away. But where should he go? Nowhere in Sa̤ul's kingdom would he be safe; and he went down to live among his old enemies, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, on the plain.

But the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş had not forgotten Dā′vid, who had slain their great Gȯ-lī′ath, and beaten them in many battles. They would have seized him and killed him; but Dā′vid acted as though he was crazy. Then the king of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş said, "Let this poor crazy man go! We do not want him here."

And Dā′vid escaped from among them, and went to live in the wilderness of Jū′dah. He found a great cave, called the cave of Ȧ-dŭl′lăm, and hid in it. Many people heard where he was, and from all parts of the land, especially from his own tribe of Jū′dah, men who were not satisfied with the rule of King Sạul, gathered around Dā′vid. Soon he had a little army of four hundred men, who followed Dā′vid as their captain.



DĀ′VID TOOK THE GIANT'S SWORD.

All of these men with Dā′vid were good fighters, and some of them were very brave in battle. Three of these men at one time wrought a great deed for Dā′vid. While Dā′vid was in the great cave, with his men, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were holding the town of Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm, which had been Dā′vid's home. Dā′vid said one day: "How I wish that I could have a drink of the water from the well that is beside the gate of Bĕth′-lĕ-hĕm!"

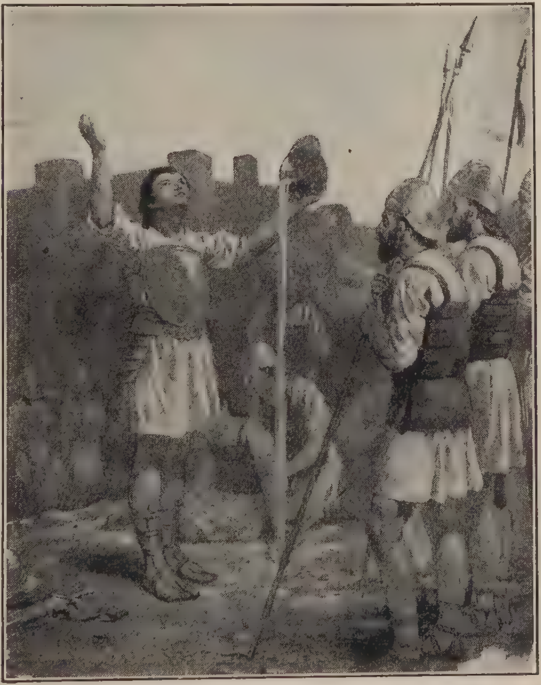
This was the well from which he had drawn water and drank when a boy; and it seemed to him that there was no water so good to his taste.

Those three brave men went out together, walked to Bĕth′-

lĕ-hĕm, fought their way thorugh the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş who were on guard, drew a vessel of water from the well, and then fought their way back through the enemies.

But when they brought the water to Dā′vid, he would not drink it. He said:

"This water was bought by the blood of three brave men. I will not drink it; but I will pour it out as an offering to the Lord, for it is sacred." So Dā′vid poured out the water as a most precious gift to the Lord. Saul soon heard that Dā′vid, with a band of men, was hiding among the mountains of Jū′dah. One day while Saul was sitting in Ḡĭb′e-ah, out of doors under a tree, with his nobles around him, he said, "You are men of my own tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn, yet none of you will help me to find this son of Jĕs′se, who has made an agreement with my own son against me, and who has gathered an army, and is waiting to rise against me. Is no one of you with me and against mine enemy?"



THE WATER FROM THE WELL OF BĔTH′-LĔ-HĔM.

One man, whose name was Dō′eg, an Ē′dom-īte, said, "I was at the city of the priests some time ago, and saw the son of Jĕs′se come to the chief priest, Ȧ-hĭm′e-lĕch; and the priest gave him loaves of bread and a sword." "Send for Ȧ-hĭm′e-lĕch and all the priests," commanded King Saul; and they took all the priests as prisoners, eighty-five men in all, and brought them before King Saul. And Saul said to them, "Why have you priests joined with Dā′vid, the son of Jĕs′se, to rebel against me, the king? You have given him bread, and a sword, and have shown yourselves his friends."

Then Ă-hĭm′e-lĕch, the priest, answered the king, "There is no one among all the king's servants as faithful as Dā′vid; and he is the king's son-in-law, living in the palace, and sitting in the king's council. What wrong have I done in giving him bread? I knew nothing of any evil that he had wrought against the king."

Then the king was very angry. He said, "You shall die, Ă-hĭm′e-lĕch, and all your father's family, because you have helped this man, my enemy. You knew that he was hiding from me, and did not tell me of him."

And the king ordered his guards to kill all the priests. But they would not obey him, for they felt that it was a dreadful deed to lay hands upon the priests of the Lord. This made Saul all the more furious, and he turned to Dō′eg, the Ē′dom-īte, the man who had told of Dā′vid's visit to the priest, and Saul said to Dō′eg, "You are the only one among my servants who is true to me. Do you kill these priests who have been unfaithful to their king."

And Dō′eg, the Ē′dom-īte, obeyed the king, and killed eighty-five men who wore the priestly garments. He went to the city of the priests, and killed all their wives and children, and burned the city.

One priest alone escaped, a young man named Ă-bī′a-thär, the son of Ă-hĭm′e-lĕch. He came to Dā′vid with the terrible news, that Saul had slain all the priests, and he brought the high-priest's breastplate and his robes.

Dā′vid said to him, "I saw this man Dō′eg, the Ē′dom-īte, there on that day, and I knew that he would tell Saul. Without intending to do harm, I have caused the death of all your father's house. Stay with me, and fear not. I will care for your life with my own."

Ă-bī′a-thär was now the high-priest, and he was with Dā′vid, and not with Saul. All through the land went the news of Saul's dreadful deed, and everywhere the people began to turn from Saul, and to look toward Dā′vid as the only hope of the nation.

Story Eight

HOW DAVID SPARED SAUL'S LIFE

I Samuel xxiii : 1, to xxvii : 12.

AFTER this Dā′vid and his men hid in many places in the mountains of Jū′dah, often hunted by Sạul, but always escaping from him. At one time Jŏn′a-than, Sạul's son, came to meet Dā′vid in a forest, and said to him, "Fear not, for the Lord is with you; and Sạul, my father, shall not take you prisoner. You will yet be the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and I shall stand next to you; and my father knows this."

And Jŏn′a-than and Dā′vid made again the promise to be true to each other, and to each other's children always. Then they parted; and Dā′vid never again saw his dear friend, Jŏn′a-than.

At one time Dā′vid was hiding with a few men in a great cave near the Dead Sea, at a place called Ĕn=gē′dī. They were far back in the darkness of the cave, when they saw Sạul come into the cave alone, and lie down to sleep. Dā′vid's men whispered to him, "Now is the time of which the Lord said, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you may do to him whatever you please.'"

Then Dā′vid went toward Sạul very quietly with his sword in his hand. His men looked to see him kill Sạul, but instead, he only cut off a part of Sạul's long robe. His men were not pleased at this; but Dā′vid said to them, "May the Lord forbid that I should do harm to the man whom the Lord has anointed as king."

And Dā′vid would not allow his men to harm Sạul. After a time Sạul rose up from sleep and went out of the cave. Dā′vid followed him at a distance, and called out to him. "My lord the king!"

Sạul looked around, and there stood Dā′vid, bowing to him and holding up the piece of his royal robe. Dā′vid said to Sạul, "My lord, O king, why do you listen to the words of men who tell you that Dā′vid is trying to do you harm? This very day the Lord gave you into my hand in the cave, and some told me to kill you, but I said, 'I will not do harm to my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed king.' See, my father, see the skirt of your robe. I cut it off to show you that I would do you no harm, though you are hunting after me to kill me. May the Lord judge between you and me, and may the Lord do justice for me upon you; but my hand shall not touch you."

When Sa̤ul heard these words his old love for Dā'vid came back to him, and he cried out, "Is that your voice, my son Dā'vid?" And Sa̤ul wept, and said, "You are a better man than I am, for you have done good to me, while I have been doing harm to you. May the Lord reward you for your kindness to me this day! I know that it is God's will that you shall be king, and you will rule over this people. Now give to me your word, in the name of the Lord, that you will not destroy my family, but that you will spare their lives."

And Dā'vid gave his promise to Sa̤ul in the name of the Lord; and Sa̤ul led his men away from hunting Dā'vid to his palace at Ḡĭb'e-ah; but Dā'vid kept still in his hiding-place, for he could not trust Sa̤ul's promises to spare his life.

And it was not long before Sa̤ul was again seeking for Dā'vid in the wilderness of Jū'dah, with Ăb'nĕr, Sa̤ul's uncle, the commander of his army, and under him three thousand men. From his hiding-place in the mountains Dā'vid looked down on the plain, and saw Sa̤ul's camp almost at his feet. That night Dā'vid and Ȧ-bĭsh'a-ī, one of Dā'vid's men, came down quietly and walked into the middle of Sa̤ul's camp, while all his guards were asleep. Sa̤ul himself was sleeping, with his spear standing in the ground at his head, and a bottle of water tied to it.

Ȧ-bĭsh'a-ī, Dā'vid's follower, knew that Dā'vid would not kill King Sa̤ul, and he said to Dā'vid, "God has given your enemy into your hand again. Let me strike him through to the ground at one stroke; only once; I will not need to strike twice."

But Dā'vid said, "You shall not destroy him. Who can strike the anointed of the Lord without being guilty of a crime? Let the Lord strike him, or let him die when God wills it, or let him fall in battle; but he shall not die by my hand. Let us take his spear and his water-bottle, and let us go."

So Dā'vid took Sa̤ul's spear and his bottle of water, and then Dā'vid and Ȧ-bĭsh'a-ī walked out of the camp without awakening any one. In the morning Dā'vid called out to Sa̤ul's men and to

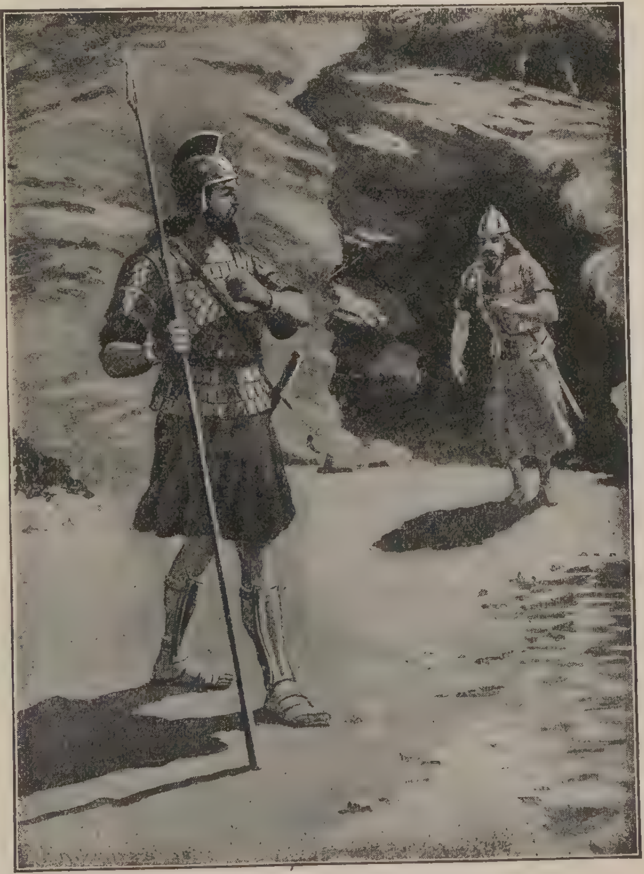
Ăb′nẽr, the chief of Sa̤ul's army, "Ăb′nẽr, where are you? Why do you not answer, Ăb′nẽr?"

And Ăb′nẽr answered, "Who are you, calling to the camp?"

Then Dā′vid said, "Are you not a great man, Ăb′nẽr? Who is like you in all Ĭş′ra-el? Why have you not kept your watch over the king? You deserve to be put to death for your neglect! See, here is the king's spear and his bottle of water!"

Sa̤ul knew Dā′vid's voice, and he said, "Is that your voice, my son Dā′vid?"

And Dā′vid answered, "It is my voice, my lord, O king. Why do you pursue me? What evil have I done? May God deal with the men who have stirred you up against me. I am not worth all the trouble you are taking to hunt for me. The king of Ĭş′ra-el is seeking for one who is as small as a flea or a little bird in the mountains!"



DĀ′VID SPARES SA̤UL'S LIFE.

Then Sa̤ul said, "I have done wrong; come back, my son Dā′vid, and I will no longer try to do harm to you, for you have spared my life to-day!" Dā′vid said, "Let one of the young men come and take the king's spear. As I have spared your life to-day, may the Lord spare mine."

So Dā′vid went his way, for he would not trust himself in Sa̤ul's hands, and Sa̤ul led his men back to his home at Ḡĭb′e-ah. Dā′vid now was leading quite an army and was a powerful ruler. He made an agreement with the king of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş who lived at Găth, King Ā′chish, and went down to the plain by the Great Sea, to live among the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. And Ā′chish gave him a city called Zĭk′lăg, on the south of the tribe-land of Jū′dah. To this place Dā′vid took his followers, and there he lived during the last year of Sa̤ul's reign.

Story Nine

THE LAST DAYS OF KING SAUL

I Samuel xxviii : 1, to xxxi : 13.

ONCE more the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş gathered together to make war on King Sa̤ul and the land of Ĭş′ra-el. The king of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, Ā′chish, sent for Dā′vid, and said to him, "You and your men shall go with me in the army, and fight against the men of Ĭş′ra-el."

For Dā′vid was now living in the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne country, and under their rule. So Dā′vid came from Zĭk′lăg, with all his six hundred men, and they stood among the armies of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş. But when the lords of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş saw Dā′vid and his men, they said, "Why are these Ĭş′ra-el-ītes here? Is not this the man of whom they sang,

'Sa̤ul slew his thousands,
And Dā′vid his ten thousands.'

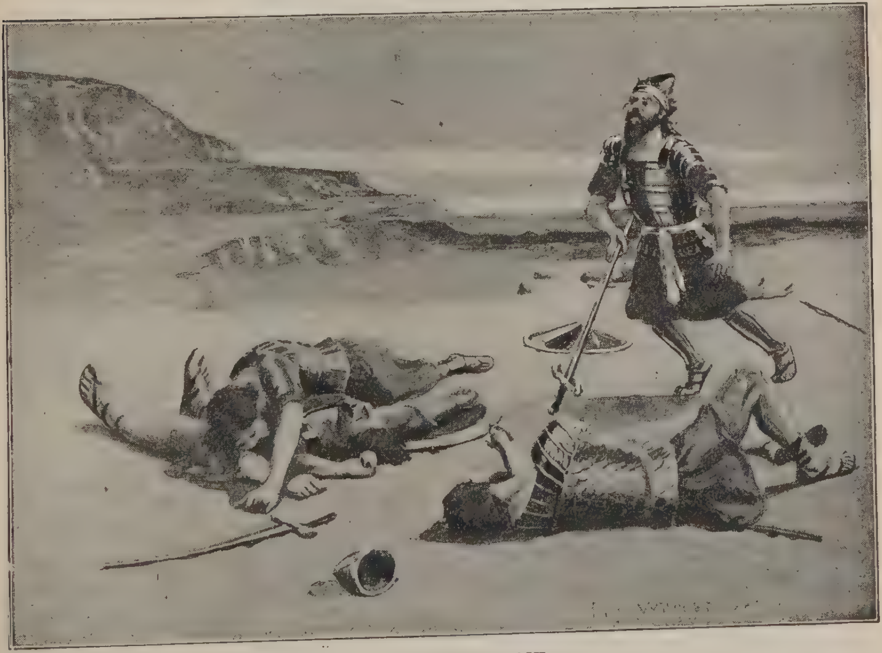
Will not this man turn from us in the battle, and make his peace

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

with his king by fighting against us? This man shall not go with us to the war."

Then Ā′chish, the king of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, sent away Dā′vid and his men, so that Dā′vid was not compelled to fight against his own people. But when he came to his own city, Zĭk′lăg, he found it had been burned and destroyed; and all the people in it, the wives and children of Dā′vid's men, and Dā′vid's own wives also, had been carried away by the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes into the desert on the south.

The Lord spoke to Dā′vid through the high-priest, Ā′bī′a-thär, saying, "Pursue these men, and you will overtake them, and take back all that they have carried away."



THE DEATH OF SAUL.

So Dā′vid followed the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes into the wilderness. His march was so swift that a part of his men could not endure it, but stopped to rest at the brook Bē′sôr, while four hundred men went on with Dā′vid. He found the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes in their camp, without guards, feasting upon the spoil that they had taken. And Dā′vid and his men fell upon them suddenly and killed all of them, except four hundred men who escaped on camels far to the desert, where Dā′vid could not follow them. And Dā′vid took from these robbers all the women and children that they had carried away from Zĭk-lăg, and among them Dā′vid's own two wives; also he took a great amount of treasure and of spoil, not only all that these men had found in Zĭk-lăg, but what they had taken in many other places.

Dā′vid divided all these things between himself and his men, giving as much to those who had stayed at the brook Bē′sôr as to those who had fought with the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes. This treasure taken from the Ăm′a-lĕk-ītes made Dā′vid very rich; and from it he sent presents to many of his friends in the tribe of Jū′dah.

While Dā′vid was pursuing his enemies in the south, the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş were gathering a great host in the middle of the land, on the plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon, at the foot of Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ. Sa̤ul and his men were on the side of Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ, near the same spring where Ḡĭd′e-on's men drank, as we read in Story Ten in Part Second. But there was no one like Ḡĭd′e-on now, to lead the men of Iş′ra-el, for King Sa̤ul was old, and weakened by disease and trouble; Săm′-u-el had died many years before; Dā′vid was no longer by his side; Sa̤ul had slain the priests, through whom in those times God spoke to men; and Sa̤ul was utterly alone, and knew not what to do, as he saw the mighty host of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş on the plain. And the Lord had forsaken Sa̤ul, and would give him no word in his sore need.

Sa̤ul heard that there was living at Ĕn′-dôr, on the north side of the Hill Mō′reh, not far from his camp, a woman who could call up the spirits of the dead. Whether she could really do this or only pretended to do it, we do not know, for the Bible does not tell. But Sa̤ul was so anxious to have some message from the Lord, that at night he sought this woman. He took off his kingly robes and came dressed as a common man, and said to her, "Bring me up from the dead the spirit of a man whom I greatly long to meet."

And the woman said, "What spirit shall I call up?"

And Sa̤ul answered, "Bring me up the spirit of Săm′u-el the prophet."

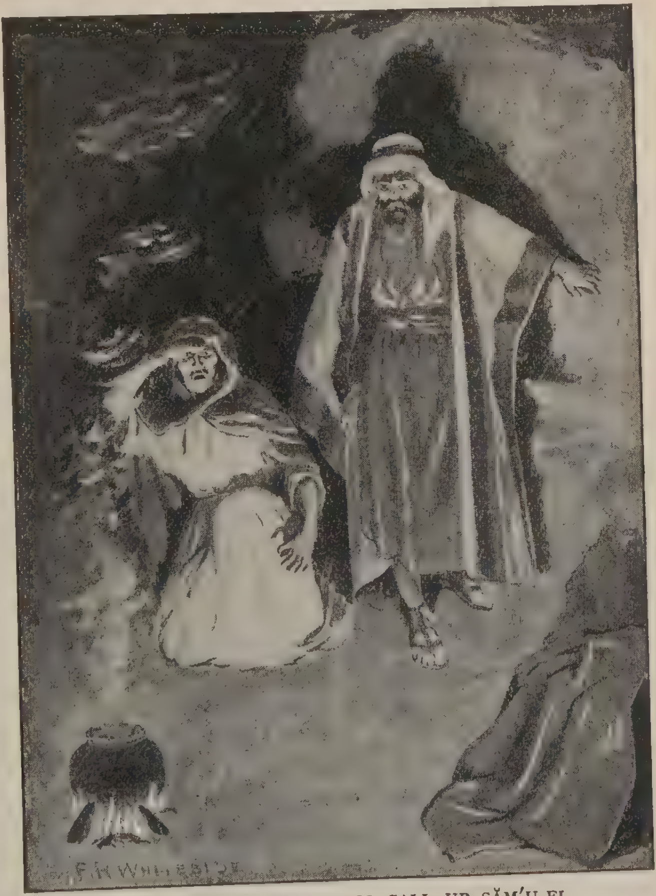
Then the woman called for the spirit of Săm′u-el; and whether spirits had ever arisen from the dead before or not, at that time the Lord allowed the spirit of Săm′u-el to rise up from his place among the dead, to speak to King Sa̤ul.

When the woman saw Săm′u-el's spirit she was filled with fear.

She cried out, and Sạul said to her, "Do not fear; but tell me whom you see."

For Sạul himself could not see the spirit whom the woman saw. And she said, "I see one like a god rising up. He is an old man, covered with a long robe."

Then out of the darkness a voice came from the spirit whom Sạul's eyes could not see. "Why have you troubled me, and called me out of my rest?"



SẠUL ASKS THE WOMAN TO CALL UP SĂM′U-EL.

And Sạul answered Săm′u-el, "I am in great distress, for the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes make war upon me, and God has forsaken me. He will not speak to me either by a prophet, or a priest, or in a dream. And I have called upon you that you may tell me what to do." And the spirit of Săm′u-el said to Sạul, "If the Lord has forsaken you and has become your enemy, why do you call upon me to help you? The Lord has dealt with you as I warned you that he would do. Because you would not obey the Lord, he has taken the kingdom away from you and your house, and has given it to Dā′vid. And the Lord will give Ĭş′ra-el into the hands of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş; and to-morrow you and your three sons shall be as I am, among the dead." And then the spirit of Săm′u-el the prophet passed from sight. When Sa̤ul heard these words he fell down as one dead, for he was very weak, as he had taken no food all that day. The woman and Sa̤ul's servants who were with him raised him up, and gave him food, and tried to speak to him words of cheer. Then Sa̤ul and his men went over the mountain to their camp.

On the next day a great battle was fought on the side of Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ. The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş did not wait for Sa̤ul's warriors to attack them. They climbed up the mountain, and fell upon the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes in their camp. Many of the men of Ĭş′ra-el were slain in the fight, and many more fled away. Sa̤ul's three sons were killed, one of them, the brave and noble Jŏn′a-than.

When Sa̤ul saw that the battle had gone against him, that his sons were slain, and that the enemies were pressing closely upon him, he called to his armor-bearer, and said, "Draw your sword and kill me; it would be better for me to die by your hand than for the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş to come upon me and slaughter me."

But the armor-bearer would not draw his sword upon his king, the Lord's anointed. Then Sa̤ul took his own sword and fell upon it, and killed himself among the bodies of his own men.

On the next day the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş came to strip off the armor and carry away the weapons of those who had been slain. The crown of King Sa̤ul and the bracelet on his arm had been already carried away; but the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş took off his armor and sent it to the temple of their idol, Dā′gon; and the body of Sa̤ul and those of his three sons they fastened to the wall of Bĕth′=shăn, a Cā′năan-īte city in the valley of the Jôr′dan.

You remember how Sa̤ul, in the beginning of his reign, had rescued the city of Jā′besh=ḡĭl′e-ăd from the Ăm′mon-ītes. The men of Jā′besh had not forgotten Sa̤ul's brave deed. When they heard what had been done with the body of Sa̤ul they rose up in the night and went down the mountains and walked across the Jôr′dan, and came to Bĕth′=shăn. They took down from the wall the bodies of Sa̤ul and his sons, and carried them to Jā′besh; and that they might not be taken away again, they burned them and buried their ashes under a tree; and they mourned for Sa̤ul seven days. Thus came to an end the reign of Saul, which began well, but ended in failure and in ruin, because Saul forsook the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el.

Saul had reigned forty years. At the beginning of his reign the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were almost free from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and for a time Saul seemed to have success in driving the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş out of the land. But after Saul forsook the Lord, and would no longer listen to Săm′u-el, God's prophet, he became gloomy and full of fear, and lost his courage, so that the land fell again under the power of its enemies. Dā′vid could have helped him, but he had driven Dā′vid away; and there was no strong man to stand by Saul and win victories for him. So at the end, when Saul fell in battle, the yoke of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş was on Ĭş′ra-el heavier than at any time before.

WOMEN GRINDING GRAIN IN BIBLE TIMES.

Story Ten

THE SHEPHERD BOY BECOMES A KING

II Samuel i : 1, to iv : 12.

ON the third day after the battle on Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ, Dā′vid was at his home in Zĭk′lăg, on the south of Jū′dah, when a young man came into the town, running, with garments torn and earth on his head, as was the manner of those in deep grief. He hastened to Dā′vid, and fell down before him. And Dā′vid said to him, "From what place have you come?"

And the young man said, "Out of the camp of Ĭş′ra-el I have escaped."

And Dā′vid said to him, "What has taken place? Tell me quickly."

Then the man answered, "The men of Ĭş′ra-el have been beaten in the battle; very many of them are slain, and the rest have fled away. King Sạul is dead, and so is Jŏn′a-than, his son."

"How do you know that Sạul and Jŏn′a-than are dead?" asked Dā′vid.

And the young man said, "I happened to be on Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ in the battle; and I saw Sạul leaning upon his spear wounded, and near death, with his enemies close upon him. And he said to me, 'Come to me, and kill me, for I am suffering great pain.' So I stood beside and killed him, for I saw that he could not live. And I took the crown that was on his head, and the bracelet on his arm, and I have brought them to you, my lord Dā′vid."

Then Dā′vid and all the men that were with him tore their clothes, and mourned, and wept, and took no food on that day, on account of Sạul, and of Jŏn′a-than, and for the people of Ĭş′ra-el who had fallen by the sword.

And Dā′vid said to the young man who had brought to him the news, "Who are you? To what people do you belong?"

And he said, "I am no Ĭş′ra-el-īte; I am an Ăm′a-lĕk-īte."

"How was it," said Dā′vid to him, "that you were not afraid to slay the king of Ĭs′ra-el, the anointed of the Lord? You shall die for this deed."

And Dā′vid commanded one of his men to kill him, because he had said that he had slain the king. He may have told the truth, but it is more likely that he was not in the battle, and that after the fighting he came upon the field to rob the dead bodies, and that he brought a false story of having slain Saul, hoping to have a reward. But as Dā′vid would not slay the anointed king, even though he were his enemy, he would not reward, but would rather punish the stranger who claimed to have slain him.

And Dā′vid wrote a song over the death of Saul and Jŏn′a-than. He taught it to the people of Jū′dah, and called it

THE SONG OF THE BOW.

Thy glory, O Is′ra-el, is slain upon thy high places!
How are the mighty fallen!
Tell it not in Găth.
Publish it not in the streets of Ăs′ke-lŏn;
Lest the daughters of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the heathen triumph.
Ye mountains of Gĭl-bō′à,
Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, neither fields of offerings:
For there the shield of the mighty was cast away as a vile thing,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jŏn′a-than turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jŏn′a-than were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Ĭs′ra-el, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet delicately,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
O Jŏn′a-than, slain upon thy high places!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jŏn′a-than.
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!"

After this, at the command of the Lord, Dā′vid and his men went up from Zĭk′lăg to Hē′bron, in the middle of the tribe-land of Jū′dah. And the men of Jū′dah met together at Hē′bron, and they made Dā′vid king over their tribe. And Dā′vid reigned in Hē′bron, over the tribe of Jū′dah, for seven years.

But Sạul's uncle, Ăb′nẽr, who had been the chief over his house and over his army, was not willing to have the kingdom go out of the family of Sạul. He made a son of Sạul king over all the tribes in the north of the land. This king was called Ĭsh=bō′sheth, a name which means "a worthless man." He was weak and helpless, except for the strong will and power of Ăb′nẽr, who had made him king. For six years seemingly under Ĭsh=bō′sheth, but really under Ăb′nẽr, the form of a kingdom was kept up, while Ĭsh=bō′sheth was living at Mā-hā-na′im, on the east of Jôr′dan.

HĒ′BRON, WHERE DĀ′VID WENT.

Thus for a time there were two kingdoms in Ĭş′ra-el, that of the north under Ĭsh=bō′sheth, and that of the south under Dā′vid.

But all the time Dā′vid's kingdom was growing stronger, and Ĭsh=bō′sheth's kingdom was growing weaker.

After a time Ăb′nẽr was slain by one of Dā′vid's men, and at once Ĭsh=bō′sheth's power dropped away. Then two men of his army killed him, and cut off his head, and brought it to Dā′vid. They looked for a reward, since Ĭsh=bō′sheth had been king against Dā′vid. But Dā′vid said, "As the Lord lives, who has brought me out of trouble, I will give no reward to wicked men, who have slain a good man in his own house, and upon his own bed. Take these two murderers away, and kill them!"

So the two slayers of the weak king, Ĭsh=bō′sheth, were punished with death, and the head of the slain man was buried with honor. Dā′vid had not forgotten his promise to Sạul to deal kindly with his children.

Story Eleven

THE SOUND IN THE TREE-TOPS

II Samuel v : 1, to vii : 29.

AFTER Dā′vid had reigned as king over the tribe of Jū′dah for seven years, and when Sạul's son, Ĭsh=bō′sheth, was dead, all the men in Ĭş′ra-el saw that Dā′vid was the one man who was fit to be king over the land. So the rulers and elders of all the twelve tribes came to Dā′vid in Hē′bron, and said to him, "We are all your brothers; and in time past, when Sạul was king, it was you who led the people; and the Lord said, 'Dā′vid shall be the shepherd of my people, and shall be prince over Ĭş′ra-el.' Now we are ready to make you king over all the land."

Then Dā′vid and the elders of Ĭş′ra-el made an agreement together before the Lord in Hē′bron; and they anointed Dā′vid as king over all the twelve tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, from Dăn in the far north to Bē′er-shē′bȧ in the south. Dā′vid was now thirty-seven years old, and he reigned over all Ĭş′ra-el thirty-three years.

He found the land in a helpless state, everywhere under the power of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş, and with many of its cities still held by the Cā′năan-īte people. The city of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, on Mount Zī′ŏn, had been kept as a stronghold by a Cā′năan-īte tribe called the Jĕb′u-sītes, ever since the days of Jŏsh′u-ȧ. Dā′vid led his men of war against it, but the Jĕb′u-sītes, from their high walls and steep rocks, laughed at him.

To mock King Dā′vid, they placed on the top of the wall the blind and lame people, and they called aloud to Dā′vid, "Even blind men and lame men can keep you out of our city."

THE WALL OF JĖ-RṲ′SȦ-LĔM AS IT IS NOW.

This made Dā′vid very angry, and he said to his men, "Whoever first climbs up the wall, and strikes down the blind and the lame upon it, he shall be the chief captain and general of the whole army."

Then all the soldiers of Dā′vid rushed against the wall, each striving to be first. The man who was able first to reach the enemies and strike them down was Jō′ăb, the son of Dā′vid's sister Zĕr-u-ī′ah; and he became the commander of Dā′vid's army, a place which he held as long as Dā′vid lived. After the fortress on Mount Zī′ŏn was taken from the Jĕb′u-sītes, Dā′vid made it larger and stronger, and chose it for his royal house; and around it the city of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm grew up as the chief city in Dā′vid's kingdom.

The Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş soon found that there was a new king in Ĭş′ra-el and a ruler very different from King Sạul. They gathered their army and came against Dā′vid. He met them in the valley of

Rĕph′a-ĭm, a little to the south of Jḗ-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, and won a great victory over them, and carried away from the field the images of their gods; but that the Ĭs̗′ra-el-ītes might not be led to worship them, Dā′vid burned them all with fire.

A second time the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗ came up and encamped in the valley of Rĕph′a-ĭm. And when Dā′vid asked of the Lord what he should do, the Lord said to him, "Do not go against them openly. Turn to one side, and be ready to come against them from under the mulberry-trees; and wait there until you hear a sound overhead in the tops of the trees. When you hear that sound, it will be a sign that the Lord goes before you. Then march forth and fight the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗."

And Dā′vid did as the Lord commanded him; and again a great victory was won over the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗. But Dā′vid did not rest when he had driven the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗ back to their own land. He marched with his men into the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗' country, and took their chief city, Găth, which was called "the mother city of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̗." He conquered all their land; and ended the war of a hundred years by making all the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne plain subject to Ĭs̗′ra-el.

Now that the land was free, Dā′vid thought that the time had come to bring the holy ark of the Lord out from its hiding-place, where it had remained all through the rule of Săm′u-el and the reign of Sa̤ul. This was in Kĭr′jath-jē′a-rĭm, called also Bā′al-ē, a town on the northern border of Jū′dah. Dā′vid prepared for the ark a new Tabernacle on Mount Zī′ŏn; and with the chosen men of all the tribes, he went to bring up the ark to Mount Zī′ŏn.

They did not have the ark carried by the priests, as it had been taken from place to place in the earlier days; but they stood it on a wagon, to be drawn by oxen, driven by the sons of the man in whose house the ark had been standing, though these men were not priests. And before the ark walked Dā′vid and the men of Ĭs̗′ra-el, making music upon all kinds of musical instruments.

At one place the road was rough, and the oxen stumbled, and the ark almost fell from the wagon. Ŭz′zah, one of the men driving the oxen, took hold of the ark to steady it. God's law forbade any one except a priest from touching the ark, and God was displeased with Ŭz′zah for his carelessness; and Ŭz′zah fell dead by the ark of the Lord.

This death alarmed Dā′vid and all the people. Dā′vid was afraid to have the ark of God come into his city. He stopped the procession and placed the ark in the house near by of a man named Ō′bed=ē′dom. There it stayed three months. They were afraid that it night bring harm to Ō′bed=ē′dom and his family; but instead it brought a blessing upon them all.

When Dā′vid heard of the blessings that had come to Ō′bed=ē′dom with the ark, he resolved to bring it into his own city on Mount Zī′ŏn. This time the priests carried it as the law commanded, and sacrifices were offered upon the altar. They brought up the ark into its new home on Mount Zī′ŏn, where a Tabernacle was standing ready to receive it. Then as of old the priests began to offer the daily sacrifices, and the services of worship were held, after having been neglected through so many years.

Dā′vid was now living in his palace on Mount Zī′ŏn, and he thought of building a temple to take the place of the Tabernacle, for the ark and its services. He said to Nā′than, who was a prophet, through whom the Lord spoke to the people, "See, now I live in a house of cedar; but the ark of God stands within the curtains of a tent."

"Go, do all that is in your heart," answered Nā′than, the prophet, "for the Lord is with you."

And that night the voice of the Lord came to Nā′than, saying, "Go and tell my servant Dā′vid, thus saith the Lord, 'Since the time when the children of Ĭş′ra-el came out of Ē′ġy̆pt, my ark has been in a tent; and I have never said to the people, build me a house of cedar. Say to my servant Dā′vid, I took you from the sheep-pasture, where you were following the sheep, and I have made you a prince over my people Ĭş′ra-el, and I have given you a great name and great power. And now, because you have done my will, I will give you a house. Your son shall sit on the throne after you, and he shall build me a house and a Temple. And I will give you and your children and your descendants, those who shall come from you, a throne and a kingdom that shall last forever."

This promise of God, that under Dā′vid's line should rise a kingdom to last always, was fulfilled in Jē′şuş Chrīst, who came long afterward from the family of Dā′vid, and who reigns as King in heaven and in earth.

Story Twelve

THE CRIPPLE AT THE KING'S TABLE

II Samuel viii : 1, to ix : 13.

AS soon as the kings of the nations around Ĭş′ra-el saw that a strong man was ruling over the tribes, they began to make war upon Dā′vid, for they feared to see Ĭş′ra-el gaining in power. So it came to pass that Dā′vid had many wars. The Mō′ab-ītes, who lived on the east of the Dead Sea, went to war with Dā′vid, but Dā′vid conquered them, and made Mō′ab submit to Ĭş′ra-el. Far in the north, the Sȳr′ĭ-anş came against Dā′vid; but he won great victories over them, and took Dȧ-măs′cus, their chief city, and held it as a part of his kingdom. In the south, he made war upon the Ē′dom-ītes, and brought them under his rule.

For a number of years Dā′vid was constantly at war, but at last he was at peace, the ruler of all the lands from the great river Eū-phrā′teş on the north, down to the wilderness on the south, where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had wandered; and from the great desert on the east to the Great Sea on the west. All these lands were under the rule of King Dā′vid, except the people of Tȳre and Sī′dŏn, who lived beside the Great Sea on the north of Ĭş′ra-el. These people, the Tȳr′ĭ-ans, never made war on Ĭş′ra-el, and their king, Hī′ram, was one of Dā′vid's best friends. The men of Tȳre cut down cedar-trees on Mount Lĕb′a-non for Dā′vid, and brought them to Jė-rụ′-sȧ-lĕm, and built for Dā′vid the palace which became his home.

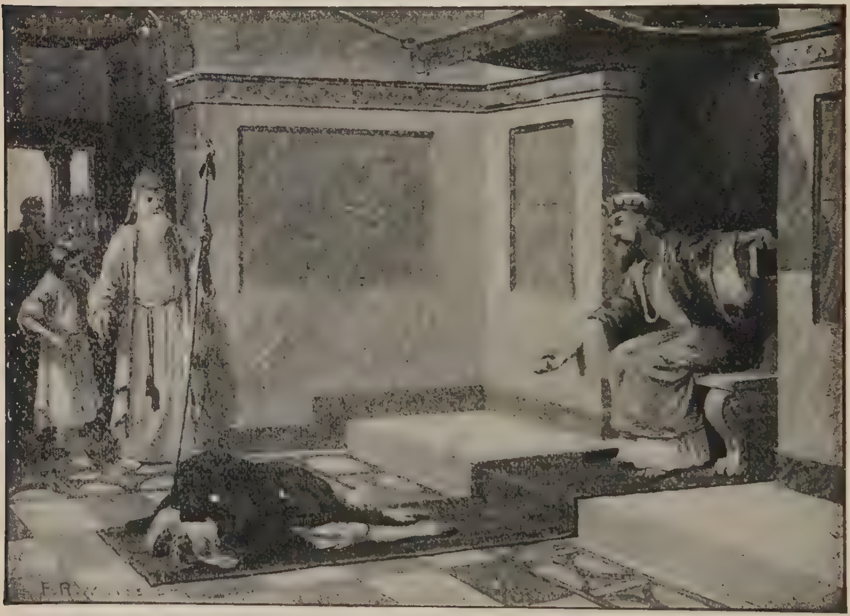
When Dā′vid's wars were over, and he was at rest, he thought of the promise that he had made to his friend Jŏn′a-than, the brave son of Sạul (see Story Six in this Part), that he would care for his children. Dā′vid asked of his nobles and the men at his court, "Are there any of Sạul's family living, to whom I can show kindness for the sake of Jŏn′a-than?"

They told Dā′vid of Sạul's servant, Zī′bȧ, who had the charge of Sạul's farm in the country; and Dā′vid sent for him. Zī′bȧ had become a rich man from his care of the lands that had belonged to Sa̤ul.

Dā′vid said to Zī′bȧ, "Are there any of Sa̤ul's family living, to whom I can show some of the kindness which God has shown toward me?"

And Zī′bȧ said, "Sa̤ul's son Jŏn′a-than left a little boy, named Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, who is now grown to be a man. He is living at Lō-dē′bär, on the east of Jôr′dan."

This child of Jŏn′a-than was in the arms of his nurse when the news came of the battle at Mount Ḡĭl-bō′ȧ, where Jŏn′a-than was slain. The nurse fled with him, to hide from the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneṣ, and in running fell; and the child's feet were so injured that ever after he was lame.



MĖ-PHĬB-O-SHĔTH, JŎN′A-THAN'S SON, BEFORE DĀ′VID.

Perhaps he was kept hidden in the distant place on the east of Jôr′dan, from fear lest Dā′vid, now that he was king, might try to kill all those who were of Sa̤ul's family; for such deeds were common in those times, when one king took the power away from another king's children.

Dā′vid sent for Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, Jŏn′a-than's son; and he was brought into Dā′vid's presence, and fell down on his face before the king, for he was in great fear. And Dā′vid said to him, "Mė-phĭb′-o-shĕth, you need have no fear. I will be kind to you, because I loved Jŏn′a-than, your father, and he loved me. You shall have all the lands that ever belonged to Sa̤ul and his family; and you shall always sit at my table in the royal palace."

Then the king called Zī′bȧ, who had been the servant of Sa̤ul, and said to him, "All the lands and houses that once belonged to Sa̤ul I have given to Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth. You shall care for them, and bring the harvests and the fruits of the fields to him. But Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth shall live here with me, and shall sit down at the king's table among the princes of the kingdom."

So Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, the lame son of Jŏn′a-than, was taken into Dā′vid's palace, and sat at the king's table, among the highest in the land. And Zī′bȧ, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, waited on him, and stood at his command.

This kindness of Dā′vid to Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth might have brought trouble to Dā′vid; for Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, the son of Jŏn′a-than, and the grandson of Sa̤ul, might have been the king if Dā′vid had not won the crown. By giving to Sa̤ul's grandson a place at his table, showing him honor, Dā′vid might have helped him to take the kingdom away from himself, if Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth had been a stronger man, with a purpose to win the throne of Ĭş′ra-el. But Dā′vid was generous, and Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth was grateful, and was contented with his place in the palace.

Story Thirteen

THE PROPHET'S STORY OF THE LITTLE LAMB

II Samuel xi : 1 to 25; Psalm 51.

WHEN Dā′vid first became king he went with his army upon the wars against the enemies of Ĭş′ra-el. But there came a time when the cares of his kingdom were many, and Dā′vid left Jō′ăb, his general, to lead his warriors, while he stayed in his palace on Mount Zī′ŏn.

One evening, about sunset, Dā′vid was walking upon the roof of his palace. He looked down into a garden near by, and saw a woman, who was very beautiful. Dā′vid asked one of his servants who this woman was, and he said to him, "Her name is Băth′=shĕ-bȧ, and she is the wife of U-rī′ah."

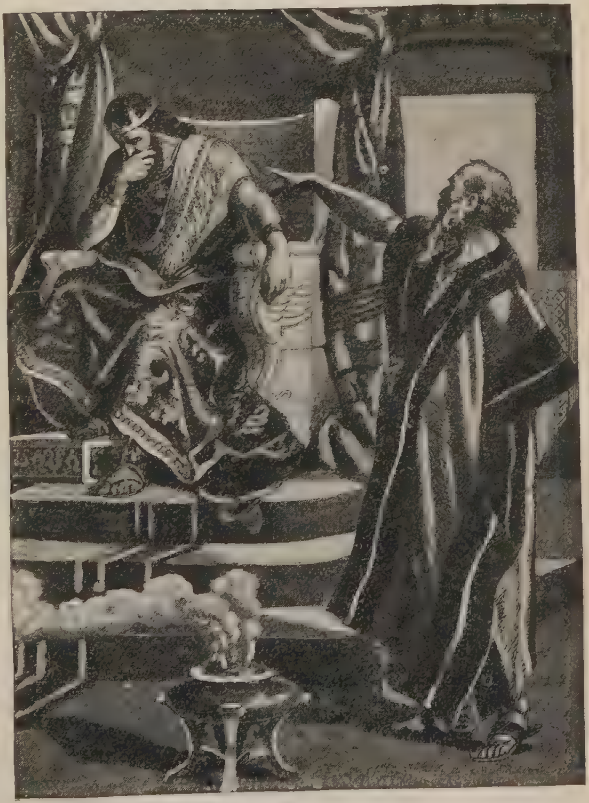
Now U-rī′ah was an officer in Dā′vid's army, under Jō′ăb; and at that time he was fighting in Dā′vid's war against the Ăm′mon-ītes, at Răb′bah, near the desert, on the east of Jôr′dan. Dā′vid sent for U-rī′ah's wife, Băth′=shĕ-bȧ, and talked with her. He loved her, and greatly longed to take her as one of his own wives,—for in those times it was not thought a sin for a man to have more than one wife. But Dā′vid could not marry Băth′=shĕ-bȧ while her husband, U-rī′ah, was living. Then a wicked thought came into Dā′vid's heart, and he formed a plan to have U-rī′ah killed, so that he could then take Băth′=shĕ-bȧ into his own house.

Dā′vid wrote a letter to Jō′ăb, the commander of his army. And in the letter he said, "When there is to be a fight with the Ăm′mon-ītes, send U-rī′ah into the middle of it, where it will be the hottest; and manage to leave him there, so that he may be slain by the Ăm′mon-ītes."

And Jō′ăb did as Dā′vid had commanded him. He sent U-rī′ah with some brave men to a place near the wall of the city, where he knew that the enemies would rush out of the city upon them;

there was a fierce fight beside the wall; U-rī′ah was slain, and other brāve men with him. Then Jō′ăb sent a messenger to tell King Da′vid how the war was being carried on, and especially that U-rī′ah, one of his brave officers, had been killed in the fighting.

When Dā′vid heard this, he said to the messenger, "Say to Jō′ăb, 'Do not feel troubled at the loss of the men slain in battle. The sword must strike down some. Keep up the siege; press forward, and you will take the city.'"



THE PROPHET NĀ′THAN REPROVES DĀ′VID.

And after Băth′=shĕ-bȧ had mourned over her husband's death for a time, then Dā′vid took her into his palace, and she became his wife. And a little child was born to them, whom Dā′vid loved greatly. Only Jō′ăb, and Dā′vid, and perhaps a few others, knew that Dā′vid had caused the death of U-rī′ah; but God knew it, and God was displeased with Dā′vid for this wicked deed.

Then the Lord sent Nā′than, the prophet, to Dā′vid to tell him that, though men knew not that Dā′vid had done wickedly, God had seen it, and would surely punish Dā′vid for his sin. Nā′than came to Dā′vid, and he spoke to him thus:

"There were two men in one city; one was rich, and the other poor. The rich man had great flocks of sheep and herds of cattle;

but the poor man had only one little lamb that he had bought. It grew up in his home with his children, and drank out of his cup, and lay upon his lap, and was like a little daughter to him.

"One day a visitor came to the rich man's house to dinner. He did not take one of his own sheep to kill for his guest. He robbed the poor man of his lamb, and killed it, and cooked it for a meal with his friend."

When Dā'vid heard this, he was very angry. He said to Nā'than, "The man who did this thing deserves to die! He shall give back to his poor neighbor fourfold for the lamb taken from him. How cruel to treat a poor man thus, without pity for him!"

And Nā'than said to Dā'vid, "You are the man who has done this deed. The Lord made you king in place of Saul, and gave you a kingdom. You have a great house, and many wives. Why, then, have you done this wickedness in the sight of the Lord? You have slain U-rī'ah with the sword of the men of Ăm'mon; and you have taken his wife to be your wife. For this there shall be a sword drawn against your house; you shall suffer for it, and your wives shall suffer, and your children shall suffer, because you have done this."

When Dā'vid heard all this, he saw, as he had not seen before, how great was his wickedness. He was exceedingly sorry; and said to Nā'than, "I have sinned against the Lord."

And Dā'vid showed such sorrow for his sin that Nā'than said to him, "The Lord has forgiven your sin; and you shall not die on account of it. But the child that U-rī'ah's wife has given to you shall surely die."

Soon after this the little child of Dā'vid and Băth'=shĕ-bȧ whom Dā'vid loved greatly, was taken very ill. Dā'vid prayed to God for the child's life; and Dā'vid took no food, but lay in sorrow, with his face upon the floor of his house. The nobles of his palace came to him, and urged him to rise up and take food, but he would not. For seven days the child grew worse and worse, and Dā'vid remained in sorrow. Then the child died; and the nobles were afraid to tell Dā'vid, for they said to each other, "If he was in such grief while the child was living, what will he do when he hears that the child is dead?"

But when King Dā'vid saw the people whispering to one another with sad faces, he said, "Is the child dead?"

And they said to him, "Yes, O king, the child is dead."

Then Dā′vid rose up from the floor where he had been lying. He washed his face, and put on his kingly robes. He went first to the house of the Lord, and worshipped; then he came to his own house, and sat down to his table, and took food. His servants wondered at this, but Dā′vid said to them, "While the child was still alive, I fasted, and prayed, and wept; for I hoped that by prayer to the Lord, and by the mercy of the Lord, his life might be spared. But now that he is dead, my prayers can do no more for him. I cannot bring him back again. He will not come back to me, but I shall go to him."

And after this God gave to Dā′vid and to Băth′=shĕ-bȧ, his wife, another son, whom they named Sŏl′o-mon. The Lord loved Sŏl′o-mon, and he grew up to be a wise man.

After God had forgiven Dā′vid's great sin, Dā′vid wrote the Fifty-first Psalm, in memory of his sin and of God's forgiveness. Some of its verses are these:

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness:
According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my trangressions.
Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions:
And my sin is ever before me.
Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight:

* * * * * * * * *

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

* * * * * * * * *

Hide thy face from my sins,
And blot out all mine iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence;
And take not thy holy spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
And uphold me with a free spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors thy ways;
And sinners shall be converted unto thee.

* * * * * * * * *

For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:
Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise.

Story Fourteen

DAVID'S HANDSOME SON, AND HOW HE STOLE THE KINGDOM

II Samuel xiii : 1, to xvii : 23.

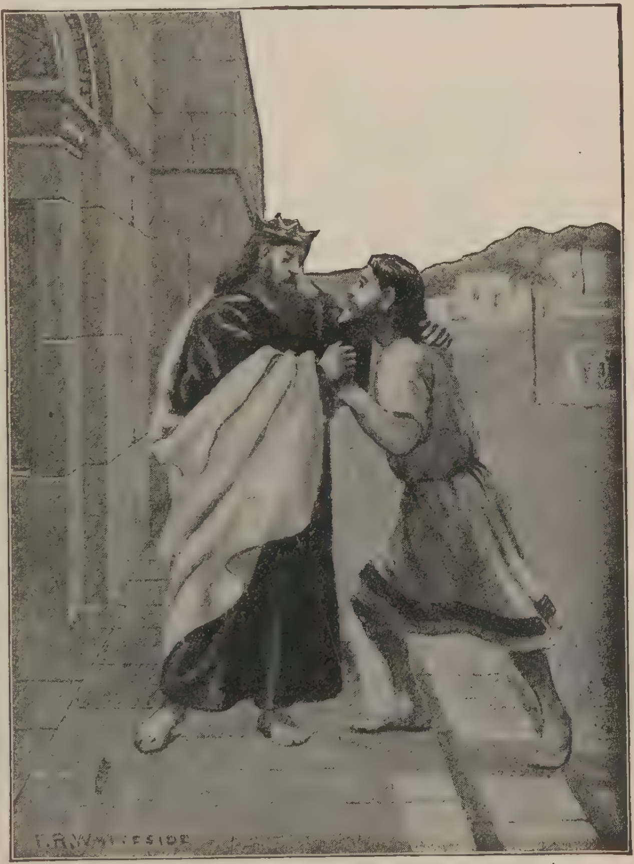
NOT long after Dā′vid's sin, the sorrows of which the prophet had foretold him, began to fall upon Dā′vid. He had many wives, and his wives had many sons: but most of his sons had grown up wild and wicked, because Dā′vid had not watched over them, and not taught them in their youth to love God and do God's will. He had been too busy as a king to do his duty as a father.

One of Dā′vid's sons was Ăb′sa-lŏm, whose mother was the daughter of Tăl′māi, the king of a little country called Gē′shŭr, on the north of Ĭş′ra-el. Ăb′sa-lŏm was said to be the most beautiful young man in all the land. He had long locks of hair, of which he was very proud, because all the people admired them. Ăb′sa-lŏm became very angry with Ăm′nŏn, another of Dā′vid's sons, because Ăm′nŏn had done wrong to Ăb′sa-lŏm's sister, named Tā′mar.

But Ăb′sa-lŏm hid his anger against Ăm′nŏn, and one day invited Ăm′nŏn with all the king's sons to a feast at his house in the country. They all went to the feast; and while they were all at the table Ăb′sa-lŏm's servants, by his orders, rushed in and killed Ăm′nŏn. The other princes, the king's sons, were alarmed, fearing that they also would be slain; and they ran away in haste. But no harm was done to the other princes, and they came back in safety to Dā′vid.

Dā′vid was greatly displeased with Ăb′sa-lŏm, though he loved him more than any other of his sons; and Ăb′sa-lŏm went away from his father's court to that of his grandfather, his mother's father, the king of Gē′shŭr. There Ăb′sa-lŏm stayed for three years; and all the time Dā′vid longed to see him, for he felt that he had now lost both sons, Ăb′sa-lŏm as well as Ăm′nŏn. And after three years

Dā′vid allowed Ăb′sa-lŏm to come back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm; but for a time would not meet him, because he had caused his brother's death. At last Dā′vid's love was so strong that he could no longer refuse to see his son. He sent for Ăb′sa-lŏm, and kissed him, and took him back to his old place among the king's sons in the palace.



DĀ′VID SENDS FOR ĂB′SA-LŎM AND KISSES HIM.

But Ăb′sa-lŏm's heart was wicked, and ungrateful, and cruel. He formed a plan to take the throne and the kingdom away from his father, Dā′vid, and to make himself king in Dā′vid's place. He began by living in great state, as if he were already a king, with a royal chariot, and horses, and fifty men to run before him. Then too, he would rise early in the morning, and stand at the gate of the king's palace, and meet those who came to the king for any cause. He would speak to each man and find what was the purpose of his coming; and he would say:

"Your cause is good and right, but the king will not hear you; and he will not allow any other man to hear you in his place. O that I were made a judge! then I would see that right was done, and that every man received his due!" And when any man bowed down before Ăb′sa-lŏm as the king's son, he would reach out his hand, and lift him up, and kiss him as his friend. Thus Ăb′sa-lŏm won the hearts of all whom he met, from every part of the land, until very many wished that he was king instead of Dā′vid, his father. For Dā′vid no longer led the army in war, nor did he sit as judge, nor did he go among the people; but lived apart in his palace, scarcely knowing what was being done in the land.

After four years Ăb′sa-lŏm thought that he was strong enough to seize the kingdom. He said to Dā′vid, "Let me go to the city of Hē′bron, and there worship the Lord, and keep a promise which I made to the Lord while I was in the land of Ḡē′shŭr."

Dā′vid was pleased with this, for he thought that Ăb′sa-lŏm really meant to serve the Lord. So Ăb′sa-lŏm went to Hē′bron, and with him went a great company of his friends. A few of these knew of Ăb′sa-lŏm's plans, but most of them knew nothing. At Hē′bron Ăb′sa-lŏm was joined by a very wise man, named Ȧ-hĭth′o-phĕl, who was one of Dā′vid's chief advisers, and one in whom Dā′vid trusted fully.

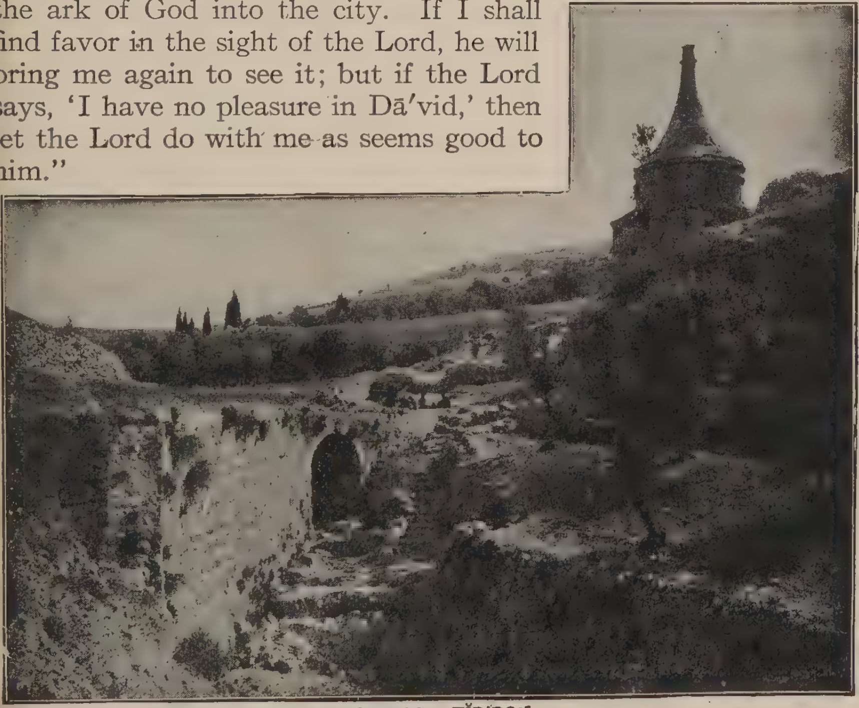
Suddenly the word was sent through all the land by swift runners, "Ăb′sa-lŏm has been made king at Hē′bron!" Those who were in the secret helped to lead others, and soon it seemed as though all the people were on Ăb′sa-lŏm's side and ready to receive him as king in place of Dā′vid.

The news came to Dā′vid in the palace, that Ăb′sa-lŏm had made himself king, that many of the rulers were with him, and that the people in their hearts really desired Ăb′sa-lŏm. Dā′vid did not know whom he could trust, and he prepared to escape before it would be too late. He took with him a few of his servants who chose to remain by his side, and his wives, and especially his wife Băth′=shĕ-bȧ, and her son, the little Sŏl′o-mon.

As they were going out of the gates they were joined by Ĭt′ta-ī, who was the commander of his guard, and who had with him six hundred trained men of war. Ĭt′ta-ī was not an Ĭş′ra-el-īte, but was a stranger in the land, and Dā′vid was surprised that he should offer to go with him. He said to Ĭt′ta-ī, "Why do you, a stranger, go with us? I know not to what places we may go or what trouble we may meet. It would be better for you and your men to go back to your own land; and may mercy and truth go with you!"

And Ĭt′ta-ī answered the king, "As the Lord God lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in what place the king shall be, whether in death or in life, there will we, his servants, be with him."

So Ĭt′ta-ī and his brave six hundred soldiers went with Dā′vid out of the city, over the brook Kĭd′ron, toward the wilderness. And soon after came Zā′dŏk and Â bī′a-thär, the priests, and the Lē′vītes, carrying the holy ark of the Lord. And Dā′vid said, "Take back the ark of God into the city. If I shall find favor in the sight of the Lord, he will bring me again to see it; but if the Lord says, 'I have no pleasure in Dā′vid,' then let the Lord do with me as seems good to him."



THE BROOK KĬD′RON.

And Dā′vid thought also that the priests might help him more in the city than if they should go away with him. He said to Zā′dŏk, "Do you go back to the city and watch; and send word to me by your son, Â-hĭm′a-ăz, and Jŏn′a-than, the son of Â-bī′a-thär. I will wait at the crossing place of the river Jôr′dan for news from you."

So Zā′dŏk and Â-bī′a-thär, the priests, carried the holy ark back to its Tabernacle on Mount Zī′ŏn, and watched closely, that they might send Dā′vid word of anything that would help his cause.

Dā′vid walked up the steep side of the Mount Ŏl′ĭ-vĕt, on the east of Jḗ-ru̥′sā̇-lĕm, with his head covered and his feet bare, as one in mourning, weeping as he walked. And all the people who were with him, and those who saw him, were weeping in their sorrow over Dā′vid's fall from his high place.

On the top of the hill Dā′vid found another man waiting to see him. It was Hū′shāi, who was one of Dā′vid's best friends. He stood there in sorrow, with his garments torn and earth upon his head, ready to go into the wilderness with Dā′vid. But Dā′vid said to Hū′shāi, "If you go with us you cannot help me in any way; but if you stay in the city, and pretend to be Ăb′sa-lŏm's friend, then perhaps you can watch against the advice that the wise man, Ā̇-hĭth′o-phĕl, gives to Ăb′sa-lŏm, and prevent Ăb′sa-lŏm from following it. Zā′dŏk and Ā̇-bī′a-thär, the priests, will help you, and through their sons, Ā̇-hĭm′a-ăz and Jŏn′a-than, you can send word to me of all that you hear."

A little past the top of the hill another man was waiting for Dā′vid. It was Zī′bā̇, the servant of Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth. You remember how kindly Dā′vid had treated Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth, because he was the son of Dā′vid's dear friend, Jŏn′a-than. Zī′bā̇ had by his side a couple of asses saddled, and on them two hundred loaves of bread, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and a quantity of fruit, and a goat-skin full of wine. Dā′vid said to Zī′bā̇, "For what purpose are all these things here?"

And Zī′bā̇ said, "The asses are for the king; and here is food for the journey, and wine for those who may grow faint and may need it in the wilderness."

And Dā′vid asked Zī′bā̇, "Where is Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth, your master?"

"He is in Jḗ-ru̥′sā̇-lĕm," said Zī′bā̇; "for he says that the kingdom may be given back to him, as he is the heir of Sa̤ul's house."

Dā′vid felt very sad as he heard that Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth had forsaken him, and he said to Zī′bā̇, "Whatever has belonged to Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth shall be yours from this time."

But Dā′vid did not know that all Zī′bā̇'s words were false, and that Mḗ-phĭb′o-shĕth had not forsaken him. This he learned afterward, as we shall see.

Soon after this another man came out to meet Dā′vid, but in a very different spirit from Ĭt′ta-ī, Hū′shāi, and Zī′bā̇. This man was Shĭm′e-ī, and he belonged to the family of King Sa̤ul. As Dā′vid and his party walked along the crest of the hill, Shĭm′e-ī walked over the hill on the other side of a narrow valley, and as he walked he threw stones at Dā′vid, and cursed him, shouting, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you wicked man! Now the Lord is bringing upon you all the wrong that you did to Saul, when he was your king. You robbed Saul of his kingdom, and now your own son is robbing you. You are suffering just as you deserve, for you are a bloody man!"

Then Ā-bĭsh-a-ī, the son of Zĕr-u-ī′ah, who was one of Dā′vid's men and Dā′vid's own nephew, said, "Why should this dog be allowed to bark against my lord the king? Let me go across the valley, and I will strike off his head at one blow!"

But Dā′vid said, "If it is the Lord's will that this man should curse Dā′vid, then let him curse on. My own son is seeking to take away my life, and is it strange that this man of another tribe should hate me? It may be that the Lord will look upon the wrong done to me, and will do good to me."

So Dā′vid and his wives, and his servants, and the soldiers who were faithful to him, went on toward the wilderness and the valley of the Jôr′dan. Soon after Dā′vid had escaped from the city, Ăb′sa-lŏm came into it with his friends and a host of his followers. As Ăb′sa-lŏm drew near, Hū′shāi, Dā′vid's friend, stood by the road, crying, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

And Ăb′sa-lŏm said to Hū′shāi, "Is this the way you treat your friend? Why have you not stayed beside your friend Dā′vid?"

Hū′shāi said to Ăb′sa-lŏm, "Whom the Lord and his people have chosen, him will I follow, and with him I will stay. As I have served the father, so will I serve the son."

Then Hū′shāi went into the palace among the followers of Ăb′sa-lŏm. And Ăb′sa-lŏm said to Ā-hĭth′o-phĕl, "Tell me what to do next?"

Now Ā-hĭth′o-phĕl was a very wise man. He knew what was best for Ăb′sa-lŏm's success, and he said, "Let me choose out twelve thousand men, and I will pursue Dā′vid this very night. We will come upon Dā′vid when he is tired, while only a few people are with him, and before he has time to form any plans or to gather an army, I will kill Dā′vid, and will harm no one else; and then you can reign as king in peace, and all the people will submit to you when they know that Dā′vid is no longer living."

Ăb′sa-lŏm thought that this was wise advice; but he sent for

Hū′shāi. He told him what Ȧ-hĭth′o-phĕl had said, and asked for his advice also. And Hū′shāi said, "The advice that Ȧ-hĭth′o-phĕl gives is not good for the present time. You know that Dā′vid and his men are very brave, and just now they are as savage as a bear robbed of her cubs. Dā′vid is with his men in some safe place, hidden in a cave or among the mountains, and they will watch against those who come out to seek for them, and will rush upon them suddenly from their hiding-place. Then, as soon as the news goes through the land that Ăb′sa-lŏm's men have been beaten, everybody will turn away from Ăb′sa-lŏm to Dā′vid. The better plan would be to wait until you can gather all the men of war in Ĭş′ra-el, from Dăn in the north to Bē′er=shē′bȧ in the south. And then, if Dā′vid is in a city, there will be men enough to pull the city in pieces, or if he is in the field we will surround him on every side." And Ăb′sa-lŏm and the rulers who were with him said to each other, "The advice of Hū′shāi is better than the advice of Ȧ-hĭth′o-phĕl. Let us do as Hū′shāi tells us to do."

So Ăb′sa-lŏm sat down in his father's palace and began to enjoy himself while they were gathering his army. This was just what Hū′shāi wished, for it would give Dā′vid time to gather his army also, and he knew that the hearts of the people would soon turn from Ăb′sa-lŏm back to Dā′vid.

Hū′shāi told Zā′dŏk and Ȧ-bī′a-thär, the priests, of Ăb′sa-lŏm's plans, and they sent word by a young woman to their sons, Ȧ-hĭm′a-ăz and Jŏn′a-than, who were watching outside the city, and these young men hastened to tell Dā′vid, who was waiting beside the river Jôr′dan. Then Dā′vid and his men found a safe refuge in Mā-hȧ-nā′im, in the tribe of Găd, across Jôr′dan; and there his friends from all the land began to come to him.

When Ȧ-hĭth′o-phĕl saw that his advice had not been taken, and that Hū′shāi was preferred in his place, he knew at once that Ăb′sa-lŏm could not hold the kingdom, and that Ăb′sa-lŏm's cause was already as good as lost. He went to his home, put all his house and his affairs in order, and hanged himself; for he thought that it was better to die by his own hand than to be put to death as a traitor by King Dā′vid.

Ăb′sa-lŏm for a little time had his wish. He sat on the throne, and wore the crown, and lived in the palace at Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm as the king of Ĭş′ra-el.

Story Fifteen

ABSALOM IN THE WOOD: DAVID ON THE THRONE

II Samuel xvii : 24, to xx : 26

THE land on the east of Jôr′dan, where Dā′vid found a refuge, was called Gĭl′e-ăd, a word which means "high," because it is higher than the land opposite on the west of Jôr′dan. There, in the city of Mā-hȧ-nā′im, the rulers and the people were friendly to Dā′vid. They brought food of all kinds and drink for Dā′vid and those who were with him; for they said, "The people are hungry, and thirsty, and very tired, from their long journey through the wilderness."

And at this place Dā′vid's friends gathered from all the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, until around him was an army. It was not so large as the army of Ăb′sa-lŏm, but in it were more of the brave old warriors who had fought under Dā′vid in other years. Dā′vid divided his army into three parts, and placed over the three parts Jō′ăb, his brother Ȧ-bĭsh′a-ī, and Ĭt′ta-ī, who had followed him so faithfully.

Dā′vid said to the chiefs of his army and to his men, "I will go out with you into the battle."

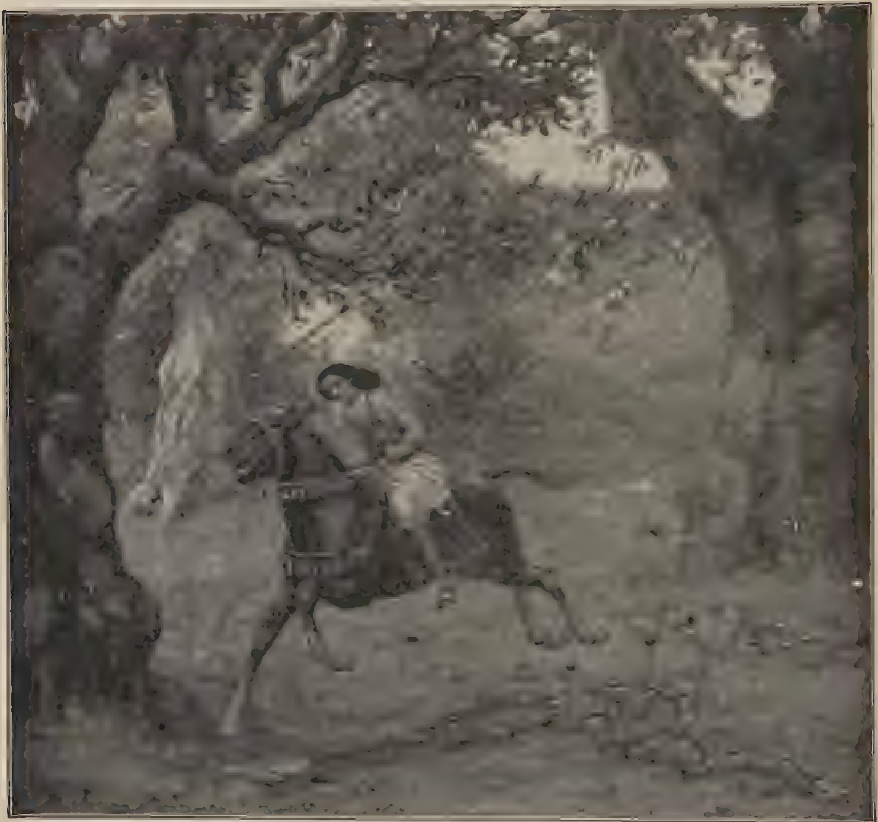
But the men said to Dā′vid, "No, you must not go with us; for if half of us should lose our lives, no one will care; but you are worth ten thousand of us, and your life is too precious. You must stay here in the city, and be ready to help us if we need help."

So the king stood by the gate of Mā-hȧ-nā′im while his men marched out by hundreds and by thousands. And as they went past the king the men heard him say to the three chiefs, Jō′ăb, and Ȧ-bĭsh′a-ī, and Ĭt′ta-ī, "For my sake, deal gently with the young man, Ăb′sa-lŏm."

Even to the last Dā′vid loved the son who had done to him such great wrong, and Dā′vid would have them spare his life.

A great battle was fought on that day at a place called "The

Wood of Ē'phră-ĭm," though it was not in the tribe of Ē'phră-ĭm, but of Găd, on the east of the Jôr'dan. Ăb'sa-lŏm's army was under the command of a man named Ăm'a-sā, who was a cousin of Jō'ăb; for his mother, Ăb'i-gail, and Jō'ăb's mother, Zĕr-ụ-ī'ah, were both sisters of Dā'vid. So both the armies were led by nephews of King Dā'vid. Ăb'sa-lŏm himself went into the battle, riding upon a mule, as was the custom of kings.



ĂB'SA-LŎM FLEEING THROUGH THE FOREST.

Dā'vid's soldiers won a great victory, and killed thousands of Ăb'sa-lŏm's men. The armies were scattered in the woods, and many men were lost, so that it was said that the woods swallowed up more men than the sword. When Ăb'sa-lŏm saw that his cause was hope-less he rode away, hoping to escape. But as he was riding under the branches of an oak-tree, his head, with its great mass of long hair, was caught in the boughs of the tree. He struggled to free himself, but could not. His mule ran away, and Ăb′sa-lŏm was left hanging in the air by his head.

One of Dā′vid's soldiers saw him, and said to Jō′ăb, "I saw Ăb′sa-lŏm hanging in an oak."

"Why did you not kill him?" asked Jō′ăb. "If you had killed him I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a girdle."

"If you should offer me a thousand pieces of silver," answered the soldier, "I would not touch the king's son; for I heard the king charge all the generals and the men, 'Let no one harm the young man Ăb′sa-lŏm.' And if I had slain him, you yourself would not have saved my life from the king's anger."

"I cannot stay to talk with you," said Jō′ăb; and with three darts in his hand he hastened to the place where Ăb′sa-lŏm was hanging. He thrust Ăb′sa-lŏm's heart through with the darts, and after that his followers, finding that Ăb′sa-lŏm was still living, pierced his body until they were sure that he was dead. Then they took down his body, and threw it into a deep hole in the forest, and heaped a great pile of stones upon it.

During his life Ăb′sa-lŏm had built for himself a monument in the valley of Kĭd′ron, on the east of Jė-ru̇′så-lĕm. There he had expected to be buried; but though the monument stood long afterward, and was called "Ăb′sa-lŏm's pillar," yet Ăb′sa-lŏm's body lay not there, but under a heap of stones in the wood of Ē′phră-ĭm.

After the battle Å-hĭm′a-ăz, the son of the priest Zā-dŏk, came to Jō′ăb. Å-hĭm′a-ăz was one of the two young men who brought news from Jė-ru̇′så-lĕm to Dā′vid at the river Jôr′dan, as we read in the last Story. He said to Jō′ăb, "Let me run to the king, and take to him the news of the battle."

But Jō′ăb knew that the message of Ab′sa-lŏm's death would not be pleasing to King Dā′vid, and he said, "Some other time you shall bear news, but not to-day, because the king's son is dead."

And Jō′ăb called a negro who was standing near, and said to him, "Go, and tell the king what you have seen."

The negro bowed to Jō′ăb, and ran. But after a time Å-hĭm′a-ăz the son of Zā′dŏk, again said to Jō′ăb, "Let me also run after the negro, and take news."

"Why do you wish to go, my son?" said Jō′ăb; "the news will not bring you any reward."

"Anyhow, let me go," said the young man; and Jō′ăb gave him leave. Then Ā-hĭm′a-ăz ran with all his might, and by a better road over the plain, though less direct than the road which the negro had taken over the mountains. Ā-hĭm′a-ăz outran the negro, and came first in sight to the watchman who was standing on the wall, while King Dā′vid was waiting below in the little room between the outer and inner gates, anxious for news of the battle, but more anxious for his son, Ăb′sa-lŏm.

The watchman on the wall called down to the king, and said, "I see a man running alone."

And the king said, "If he is alone, he is bringing a message." He knew that if men were running away after a defeat in battle there would be a crowd together. Then the watchman called again, "I see another man running alone."

And the king said, "He also is bringing some news."

The watchman spoke again, "The first runner is coming near, and he runs like Ā-hĭm′a-ăz, the son of Zā′dŏk."

And Dā′vid said, "He is a good man, and he comes with good news." Ā-hĭm′a-ăz came near, and cried out as he ran, "All is well!"

The first words which the king spoke were, "Is it well with the young man Ăb′sa-lŏm?"

Ā-hĭm′a-ăz was too wise to bring to the king the word of Ăb′sa-lŏm's death. He left that to the other messenger, and said, "When Jō′ăb sent me, there was a great noise over something that had taken place, but I did not stop to learn what it was."

A little later came the negro, crying, "News for my lord the king! This day the Lord has given you victory over your enemies!"

And Dā′vid said again, "Is it well with the young man Ăb′sa-lŏm?"

Then the negro, who knew nothing of Dā′vid's feeling, answered, "May all the enemies of my lord the king, and all that try to do him harm, be as that young man is!"

Then the king was deeply moved. His sorrow over Ăb′sa-lŏm made him forget the victory that had been won. Slowly he walked up the steps to the room in the tower over the gate, and as he walked he said, "O my son Ăb′sa-lŏm! my son, my son Ăb′sa-lŏm! I wish before God that I had died for you, O Ăb′sa-lŏm, my son, my son!"

The word soon went forth that the king, instead of rejoicing over the victory, was weeping over his son. The soldiers came stealing back to the city, not as conquerors, but as if they had been defeated. Every one felt sorry for the king, who sat in the room over the gate, with his face covered, and crying out, "O Ăb′sa-lŏm, my son! my son, my son Ăb′sa-lŏm!"

ĂB′SA-LŎM'S PILLAR.

But Jō′ăb saw that such great sorrow as the king showed was not good for his cause. He came to Dā′vid, and said to him, "You have put to shame this day all those who have fought for you and saved your life. You have shown that you love those who hate you, and that you hate those who love you. You have said by your actions that your princes and your servants, who have been true to you, are nothing to you; and that if Ăb′sa-lŏm had lived and we had all died, you would have been better pleased. Now rise up, and act like a man, and show regard for those who have fought for you. I swear to you in the name of the Lord, that unless you do this, not a man will stay on your side, and that will be worse for you than all the harm that has ever come upon you in all your life before this day!"

Then Dā′vid rose up, and washed away his tears, and put on his robes, and took his seat in the gate as a king. After this he came from Mā-hȧ-nā′im to the river Jôr′dan, and there all the people met him, to bring him back to his throne in Jė-ru̇′sȧ-lĕm.

Among the first to come was Shĭm′e-ī, the man who had cursed Dā′vid and thrown stones at him as he was flying from Ăb′sa-lŏm. He fell on his face, and confessed his crime, and begged for mercy. Ȧ-bĭsh′a-ī, Jō′ăb's brother, said, "Shall not Shĭm′e-ī be put to death, because he cursed the king, the Lord's anointed?"

But Dā′vid said, "Not a man shall be put to death this day in Ĭş′ra-el, for to-day I am king once more over Ĭş′ra-el. You shall not be slain, Shĭm′e-ī; I pledge you the word of a king."

And Zī′bȧ, the servant of Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, was there with his sons and his followers; and Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth was there also to meet the king. And Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth had not dressed his lame feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day when Dā′vid had left Jė-ru̇′sȧ-lĕm until the day when he returned in peace. And Dā′vid said to him, "Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, why did you not offer to go with me?"

"My lord, O king," said Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth, "my servant deceived me. He said, 'You are lame, and cannot go; but I will go in your name with the king, and will help him.' And he has done me wrong with the king; but what matters it all, now that the king has come again?"

Dā′vid said, "You and Zī′bȧ may divide the land and the property."

And Mė-phĭb′o-shĕth said, "Let him have it all, now that the king has come in peace to his own house!"

The army of Ăb′sa-lŏm had melted away, and was scattered throughout all Ĭş′ra-el. Dā′vid was still displeased with Jō′ăb, the chief of his army, because he had slain Ăb′sa-lŏm, contrary to Dā′vid's orders. He sent a message to Ăm′a-sȧ, who had been the commander of Ăb′sa-lŏm's army, and who was, like Jō′ăb and Ȧ-bĭsh′a-ī, Dā′vid's own nephew. He said to Ăm′a-sȧ, "You are of my own family, of my bone and my flesh, and you shall be the general in place of Jō′ăb."

Jō′ăb and his brother were strong men, not willing to submit to Dā′vid's rule; and Dā′vid thought that he would be safer on his throne if they did not hold so much power. Also, Dā′vid thought that to make Ăm′a-sȧ general would please not only those who had been friends to Ăb′sa-lŏm, but many more of the people, for many feared and hated Jō′ăb.

At the river Jôr′dan almost the whole tribe of Jū′dah were gathered to bring the king back to Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm. But this did not please the men of the other tribes. They said to the men of Jū′dah, "You act as though you were the only friends of the king in all the land! We, too, have some right to Dā′vid."

The men of Jū′dah said, "The king is of our own tribe, and is one of us. We come to meet him because we love him."

But the people of the other tribes were still offended, and many of them went to their homes in anger. The tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, in the middle of the land, was very jealous of the tribe of Jū′dah, and unwilling to come again under Dā′vid's rule. One man in Ē′phră-ĭm, Shē′bȧ, the son of Bĭch′rī, began a new rebellion against Dā′vid, which for a time threatened again to overthrow Dā′vid's power.

Ăm′a-sȧ, the new commander of the army, called out his men to put down Shē′bȧ's rebellion. But he was slow in gathering his army, and Jō′ăb, the old general, went forth with a band of his own followers. Jō′ăb met Ăm′a-sȧ, pretending to be his friend, and killed him, and then took the command. He shut up Shē′bȧ in a city far in the north, and finally caused him to be slain. So at last every enemy was put down; and Dā′vid sat again in peace upon his throne. But Jō′ăb, whom Dā′vid feared and hated because of many evil deeds that he had done, was, as before, the commander of the army and in great power. Jō′ăb was faithful to Dā′vid, and was a strong helper to Dā′vid's throne. Without Jō′ăb's courage and skill in Dā′vid's cause Dā′vid might have failed in some of his wars, and especially in the war against Ăb′sa-lŏm's followers. But Jō′ăb was cruel and wicked; and he was so strong that Dā′vid could not control him. Dā′vid felt that he was not fully the king while Jō′ăb lived.

But few people knew how Dā′vid felt toward Jō′ăb; and in appearance the throne of Dā′vid was now as strong as it had ever been; and Dā′vid's last years were years of peace and of power.

Story Sixteen

THE ANGEL WITH THE DRAWN SWORD ON MOUNT MORIAH

II Samuel xxiv : 1 to 25; I Chronicles xxi : 1 to 27.

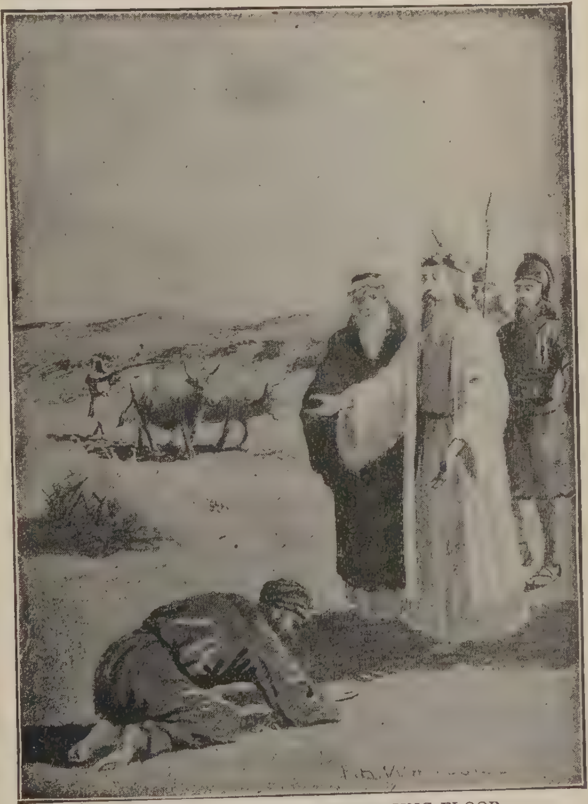
AFTER the death of Ăb'sa-lŏm, Dā'vid ruled in peace over Ĭş'ra-el for many years. His kingdom stretched from the river Ēū-phrā'tēş to the border of Ē'ġy̆pt, and from the Great Sea on the west to the great desert on the east. But again Dā'vid did that which was very displeasing to God. He gave orders to Jō'ăb, who was the commander of his army, to send officers throughout all the tribes of Ĭş'ra-el, and to count all the men who could go forth to battle.

It may be that Dā'vid's purpose was to gather a great army for some new war. Even Jō'ăb, the general, knew that it was not right to do this; and he said to Dā'vid, "May the Lord God make his people an hundred times as great as they are; but are they not all the servants of my lord the king? Why does the king command this to be done? Surely it will bring sin upon the king and upon the people."

But Dā'vid was firm in his purpose, and Jō'ăb obeyed him, but not willingly. He sent men through all the twelve tribes to take the number of those in every city and town who were fit for war. They went throughout the land, until they had written down the number of eight hundred thousand men in ten of the tribes, and of nearly five hundred thousand men in the tribe of Jū'dah, who could be called out for war. The tribe of Lē'vī was not counted, because all its members were priests and Lē'vītes in the service of the Tabernacle; and Bĕn'ja-mĭn, on the border of which stood the city of Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm, was not counted, because the numbering was never finished.

It was left unfinished because God was angry with Dā'vid and with the people on account of this sin. Dā'vid saw that he had done wickedly, in ordering the count of the people. He prayed to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, I have sinned greatly in doing this. Now, O Lord, forgive this sin, for I have done very foolishly."

Then the Lord sent to Dā'vid, a prophet, a man who heard God's voice and spoke as God's messenger. His name was Găd. Găd came to Dā'vid, and said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, You have sinned in this thing, and now you and your land must suffer for your sin. I will give you the choice of three troubles to come upon the land. Shall I send seven years of famine, in which there shall be no harvest? Or shall your enemies overcome you, and win victories over you for three months? Or shall there be three days when pestilence shall fall upon the land, and the people shall die everywhere?"


DĀ'VID GETS THE THRESHING-FLOOR.

And Dā'vid said to the prophet Găd, "This is a hard choice of evils to come upon the land; but let me fall into the hand of the Lord, and not into the hands of men; for God's mercies are great and many. If we must suffer, let the three days of pestilence come upon the land."

Then the Lord's angel of death passed through the land, and in three days seventy thousand men died. And when the angel of the Lord stretched out his hand over the city of Jḗ-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, the Lord had pity upon the people, and the Lord said to him, "It is enough; now hold back your hand, and cause no more of the people to die."

Then the Lord opened Dā′vid's eyes, and he saw the angel standing on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah, with a drawn sword in his hand, held out toward the city. Then Dā′-vid prayed to the Lord, and he said:

"O Lord, I alone have sinned, and have done this wickedness before thee. These people are like sheep; they have done nothing. Lord, let thy hand fall on me, and not on these poor people."

Then the Lord sent the prophet Găd to Dā′vid, and Găd said to him, "Go, and build an altar to the Lord upon the place where the angel was standing."

Then Dā′vid and the men of his court went out from Mount Zī′ŏn, where the city was standing, and walked up the side of Mount Mȯ-rī′ah. They found the man who owned the rock on the top of the mountain threshing wheat upon it, with his sons; for the smooth rock was used as a threshing-floor, upon which oxen walked over the heads of grain, beating out the kernels with their feet. This man was not an Ĭs̱′ra-el-īte, but a foreigner, of the race that had lived on those mountains before the Ĭs̱′ra-el-ītes came. His name was Ȧ-ra̤u′nah.

When Ȧ-ra̤u′nah saw Dā′vid and his nobles coming toward him, he bowed down with his face toward the ground, and said, "For what purpose does my lord the king come to his servant?"

"I have come," said Dā′vid, "to buy your threshing-floor, and to build upon it an altar to the Lord, that I may pray to God to stop the plague which is destroying the people."

And Ȧ-ra̤u′nah said to Dā′vid, "Let my lord the king take it freely as a gift, and with it these oxen for a burnt-offering, and the threshing-tools and the yokes of the oxen for the wood on the altar. All this, O king, Ȧ-ra̤u′nah gives to the king."

"No," said King Dā′vid, "I cannot take it as a gift; but I will pay you the price for it. For I will not make an offering to the Lord my God of that which costs me nothing."

So Dā′vid gave Ȧ-ra̤u′nah the full price for the land, and for the oxen, and for the wood. And there, on the rock, he built an altar to the Lord God, and on it he offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The Lord heard Dā′vid's prayer and took away the plague from the land.

And on that rock afterward stood the altar of the temple of the Lord on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah. The rock is standing even to this day, and over it a building called "The Dome of the Rock." Those who visit the place can look upon the very spot where Dā′vid built his altar and called upon the Lord.

Story Seventeen

SOLOMON ON DAVID'S THRONE

I Kings i: 1 to 53.

DURING the later years of Dā′vid's reign he laid up great treasure of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, for the building of a house to the Lord on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah. This house was to be called "The Temple," and it was to be made very beautiful, the most beautiful building, and the richest, in all the land. Dā′vid had greatly desired to build this house while he was the king of Ĭş′ra-el, but God said to him:

"You have been a man of war, and have fought many battles, and shed much blood. My house shall be built by a man of peace. When you die, your son Sŏl′o-mon shall reign, and he shall have peace, and shall build my house."

So Dā′vid made ready great store of precious things for the Temple, also stone, and cedar to be used in the building. And Dā′vid said to Sŏl′o-mon, his son:

"God has promised that there shall be rest and peace to the land while you are king; and the Lord will be with you, and you shall build a house, where God shall live among his people."

But Dā′vid had other sons who were older than Sŏl′o-mon; and one of these sons, whose name was Ăd-o-nī′jah, formed a plan to make himself king. Dā′vid was now very old, and he was no longer able to go out of his palace and to be seen among the people.

Ăd-o-nī′jah gathered his friends; and among them were Jō′ăb, the general of the army, and Ȧ-bī′a-thär, one of the two high-priests. They met at a place outside the wall, and had a great feast, and were about to crown Ăd-o-nī′jah as king, when word came to Dā′vid in the palace. Dā′vid, though old and feeble, was still wise. He said, "Let us make Sŏl′o-mon king at once, and thus put an end to the plan of these men."

So, at Dā′vid's command, they brought out the mule on which no one but the king was allowed to ride, and they placed Sŏl′o-mon upon it, and with the king's guards, and the nobles, and the great men, they brought the young Sŏl′o-mon down to the valley of Ḡī′hon, south of the city.

And Zā′dŏk the priest took from the Tabernacle the horn filled with holy oil that was used for anointing or pouring oil on the head of the priests when they were set apart for their work. He poured oil from this horn on the head of Sŏl′o-mon, and then the priests blew the trumpets, and all the people cried aloud, "God save King Sŏl′o-mon."

All this time Ăd-o-nī′jah, and Jō′ăb, and their friends were not far away, almost in the same valley, feasting and making merry, intending to make Ăd-o-nī′jah king. They heard the sound of trumpets and the shouting of the people. Jō′ăb said, "What is the cause of all this noise and uproar?"

A moment later Jŏn′a-than, the son of Ȧ-bīa-thär, came running in. We read of him as one of the two young men who brought news from Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm to Dā′vid at the river Jôr′dan. Jŏn′a-than said to the men who were feasting:

"Our lord, King Dā′vid, has made Sŏl′o-mon king, and he has just been anointed in Ḡī′hon; and all the princes and the heads of the army are with him, and the people are shouting, 'God save King Sŏl′o-mon!' And Dā′vid has sent from his bed a message to Sŏl′o-mon, saying, 'May the Lord make your name greater than my name has been! Blessed be the Lord, who has given me a son to sit this day on my throne!'"

When Ăd-o-nī′jah and his friends heard this they were filled with fear. Every man went at once to his house, except Ăd-o-nī′jah. He hastened to the altar of the Lord, and knelt before it, and took hold of the horns that were on its corners in front. This was a holy place, and he hoped that there Sŏl′o-mon might then have mercy on him. And Sŏl′o-mon said, "If Ăd-o-nī′jah will do right and be true to me as the king of Ĭş′ra-el, no harm shall come to him; but if he does wrong he shall die." Then Ăd-o-nī′jah came and bowed down before King Sŏl′o-mon, and promised to obey him, and Sŏl′o-mon said, "Go to your own house."

THE TOMB OF DĀ′VID AS SHOWN TO-DAY IN JĔ-RṲ′SĂ-LĔM.

Not long after this Dā′vid sent for Sŏl′o-mon; and from his bed he gave his last advice to Sŏl′o-mon. And soon after that Dā′vid died, an old man, having reigned in all forty years, seven years over the tribe of Jū′dah at Hē′bron, and thirty-three years over all Ĭş′ra-el in Jĕ-rṳ′sā-lĕm. He was buried in great honor on Mount Zī′ŏn, and his tomb remained standing for many years.

Story Eighteen

THE WISE YOUNG KING

I Kings iii: 1, to iv: 34; II Chronicles i: 1 to 13.

SŎL′O-MON was a very young man, not more than twenty years old, when he became king and bore the heavy care of a great land. For his kingdom was larger than the twelve tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, from Dăn to Bē′er=shē′bȧ. On the north he ruled over all Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, from Mount Hẽr′mon as far as the great river Eū-phrā′teş. On the east, Ăm′mŏn and Mō′ab were under his power, and in the south all the land of Ē′dom, far down into the desert where the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had wandered long before. He had no wars, as Dā′vid had before him, but at home and abroad his great realm was at peace as long as Sŏl′o-mon reigned.

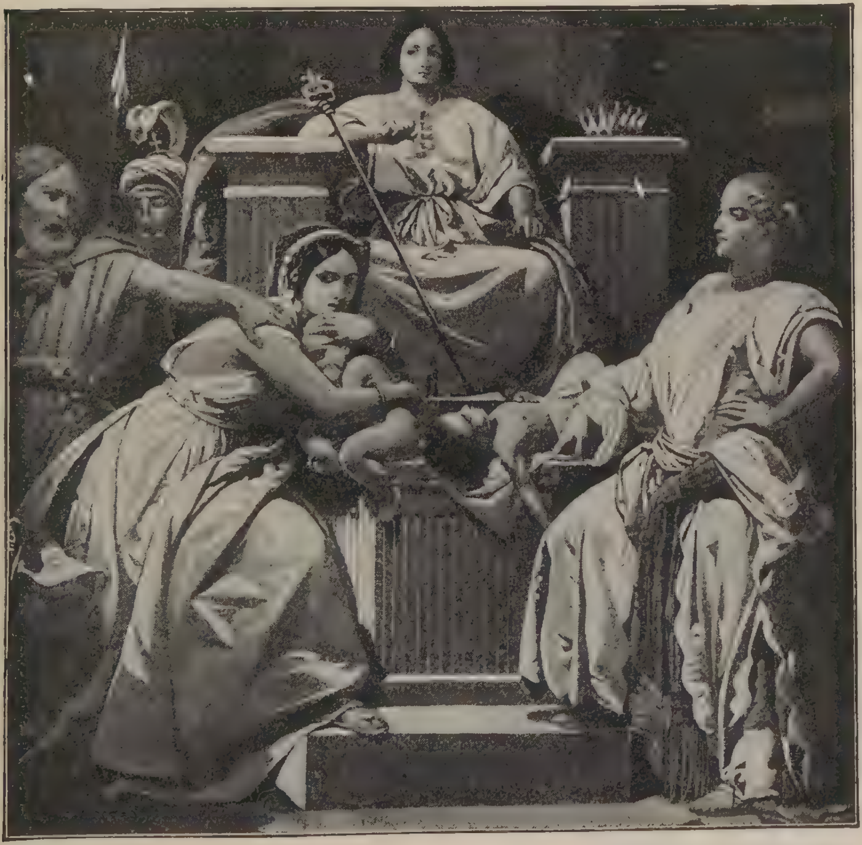
Soon after Sŏl′o-mon became king he went to Ḡĭb′e-on, a few miles north of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, where the altar of the Lord stood until the Temple was built. At Ḡĭb′e-on Sŏl′o-mon made offerings and worshipped the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el.

And that night the Lord God came to Sŏl′o-mon, and spoke to him. The Lord said, "Ask of me whatever you choose, and I will give it to you."

And Sŏl′o-mon said to the Lord, "O Lord, thou didst show great kindness to my father, Dā′vid; and now thou hast made me king in my father's place. I am only a child, O Lord. I know not how to rule this great people, which is like the dust of the earth in number. Give me, O Lord, I pray thee, wisdom and knowledge, that I may judge this people, and may know how to rule them aright."

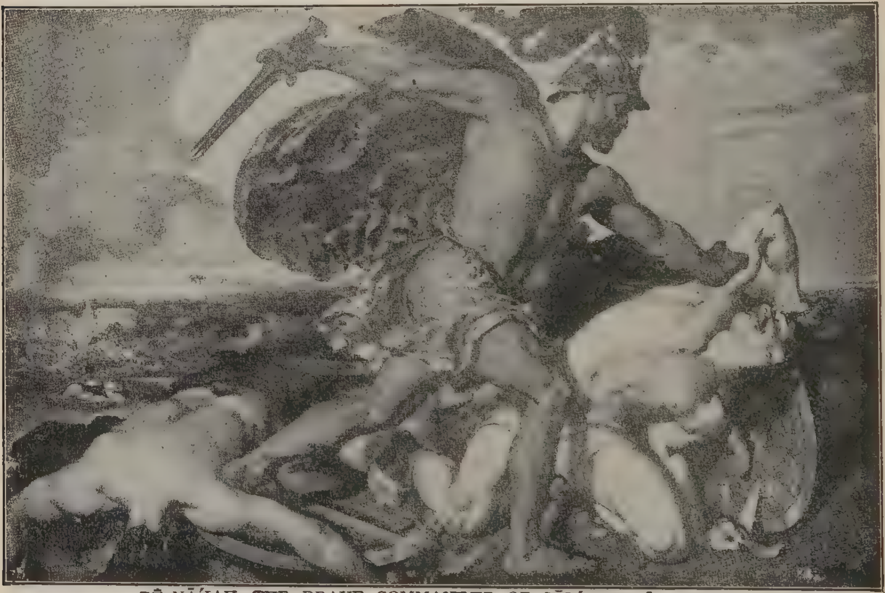
The Lord was pleased with Sŏl′o-mon's choice, and the Lord said to Sŏl′o-mon, "Since you have not asked of me long life, nor great riches for yourself, nor victory over your enemies, nor great power, but have asked wisdom and knowledge to judge this people, I have given you wisdom greater than that of any king before you, and greater than that of any king that shall come after you. And because you have asked this, I will give you not only wisdom, but also honor and riches. And if you will obey my words, as your father Dā′vid obeyed, you shall have long life, and shall rule for many years."

Then Sŏl′o-mon awoke and found that it was a dream. But it was a dream that came true, for God gave to Sŏl′o-mon all that he had promised, wisdom, and riches, and honor, and power, and long life. Soon after this Sŏl′o-mon showed his wisdom. Two women came before nim with two little babies, one dead and the other living. Each of the two women claimed the living child as



THE WISE DECISION OF THE YOUNG KING SŎL′O-MON.

her own, and said that the dead child belonged to the other woman. One of the women said, "O my lord, we two women were sleeping with our children in one bed. And this woman in her sleep lay upon her child, and it died. Then she placed her dead child beside me while I was asleep, and took my child. In the morning I saw that it was not my child; but she says it is mine, and the living child is hers. Now, O king, command this woman to give me my own child." Then the other woman said, "That is not true. The dead baby is her own, and the living one is mine, which she is trying to take from me."



BĒ-NĀ'IAH, THE BRAVE COMMANDER OF SŎL'O-MON'S GUARD.

The young king listened to both women. Then he said, "Bring me a sword."

They brought a sword, and then Sŏl'o-mon said, "Take this sword, and cut the living child in two, and give half of it to each one."

Then one of the women cried out, and said, "O my lord, do not kill my child! Let the other woman have it, but let the child live!"

But the other woman said, "No, cut the child in two, and divide it between us!"

Then Sŏl′o-mon said, "Give the living child to the woman who would not have it slain, for she is its mother."

And all the people wondered at the wisdom of one so young; and they saw that God had given him understanding.

Sŏl′o-mon chose some of the great men who had helped his father Dā′vid, to stand beside his throne and do his will. Among those was a man named Bė-nā′iah, the son of Jė-hoi′a-dȧ. He was one of those who had come to Dā′vid while he was hiding from Sạul, as we read in Story Seven of this Part. At that time Bė-nā′iah while still a young man, did a very bold deed. He found a lion in a deep pit, leaped into the pit, and killed the lion. For this act, Bė-nā′iah became famous, for few people would dare to venture so near to a lion, with the weapons in use at that time. This brave man was old in Sŏl′o-mon's day, but he was still strong, and Sŏl′o-mon gave him a high place, at the head of his guards.

Story Nineteen

THE HOUSE OF GOD ON MOUNT MORIAH

I Kings v: 1, to ix: 9; II Chronicles iii: 1, to vii: 22.

THE great work of Sŏl′o-mon's reign was the building of the house of God, which was called "The Temple." This stood on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah, on the east of Mount Zī′ŏn, and it covered the whole mountain. King Dā′vid had prepared for it by gathering great stores of gold, and silver, and stone, and cedar-wood. The walls were made of stone, and the roof of cedar.

For the building the cedar was brought from Mount Lĕb′a-non, where there were many large cedar-trees. The trees were cut down and carried to Tȳre on the seacoast. There they were made into rafts in the Great Sea, and were floated down to Jŏp′pȧ. At Jŏp′pȧ they were taken ashore and were carried up to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm. All this work was done by the men of Tȳre, at the command of their king, Hī′ram, who was a friend of Sŏl′o-mon, as he had been a friend of King Dā′vid.

All the stones for the building of the Temple were hewn into shape and fitted together before they were brought to Mount Mȯ-rī′ah. And all the beams for the roof and the pillars of cedar were carved and made to join each other; so that as the walls arose no sound of hammer or chisel was heard; the great building rose up quietly. You remember the form of the Tabernacle which was built before Mount Sī′nāi, in the wilderness, with its court, its Holy Place, and its Holy of Holies. The Temple was copied after the Tabernacle, except that it was much larger, and was a house of stone and cedar, instead of a tent.

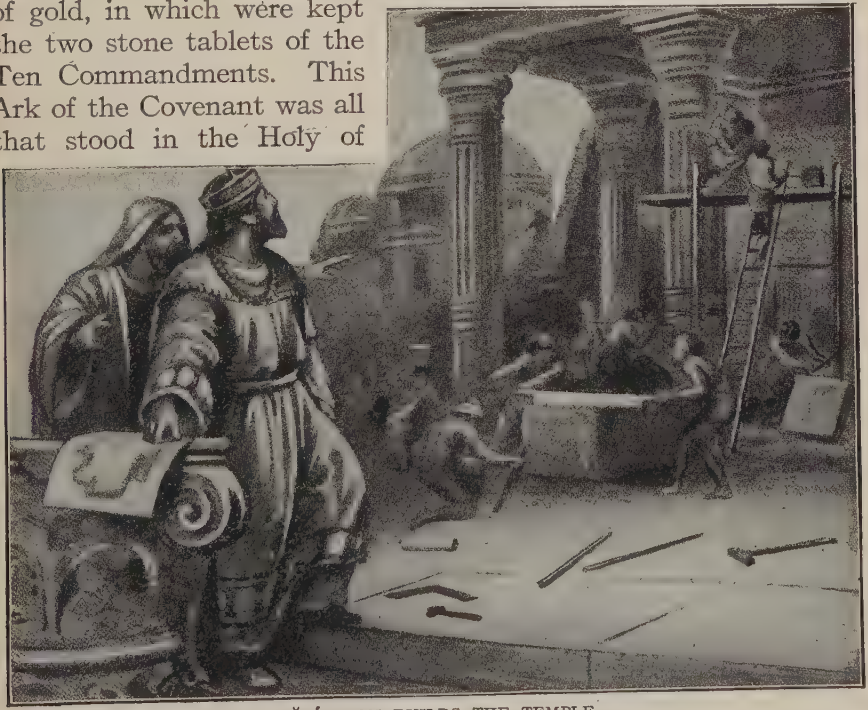
The Tabernacle had one court around it, where the priests only could enter; but the Temple had two courts, both open to the sky, with walls of stone around them, and on the walls double rows of cedar pillars, and a roof above the pillars, so that people could walk around the court upon the walls protected from the sun. The court in front was for the people, for all the men of Ĭṣ′ra-el could enter it, but no people of foreign race. This was called the "Fore-court." Beyond the Fore-court was the Court of the Priests, where only the priests were allowed to walk. At the east gate of this court stood the great altar of burnt-offerings, built of rough, unhewn stones, for no cut stones could be used in the altar. This altar stood on the rock which had been the threshing-floor of Ȧ-ra̤u′nah, where Dā′vid saw the angel of the Lord standing.

Near the altar, in the Court of the Priests, stood a great tank for water, so large that it was called "a sea." It was made of brass, and stood on the backs of twelve oxen, also made of brass. From this the water was taken for washing the offerings.

Within the Court of the Priests stood the Holy House, or the Temple building, made of marble and of cedar. Its front was a high tower, called the Porch. In this were rooms for the high-priest and his sons.

Back of the Porch was the Holy Place. This was a long room in which stood the table for the twelve loaves of the bread, and golden altar of incense. In the Holy Place of the Tabernacle stood the golden lampstand. We are not sure whether it was in the Temple; for either in place of the lampstand, or perhaps in addition to it, Sŏl′o-mon placed ten lamps of gold in the Holy Place.

Between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was a great vail, as in the Tabernacle. And in the Holy of Holies the priests placed the Ark of the Covenant. This, you remember, was a box or chest of gold, in which were kept the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. This Ark of the Covenant was all that stood in the Holy of Holies; and into this room only the high-priest came, and he only on one day in the year, the great Day of Atonement, when the scapegoat was sent away.



SŎL′O-MON BUILDS THE TEMPLE.

Outside of the Temple building were rooms for the priests. They were built on the outer wall of the house, on the rear and the two sides, but not in front, three stories high; and were entered from the outside only. In these rooms the priests lived while they were staying at the Temple to lead in the worship.

Seven years were spent in building the Temple, but at last it was finished; and a great service was held when the house was set apart to the worship of the Lord. Many offerings were burned upon the great altar, the ark was brought from Mount Zī′ŏn and placed in the Holy of Holies, and King Sŏl′o-mon knelt upon a platform in front of the altar and offered a prayer to the Lord before all the people, who filled the courts of the Temple.

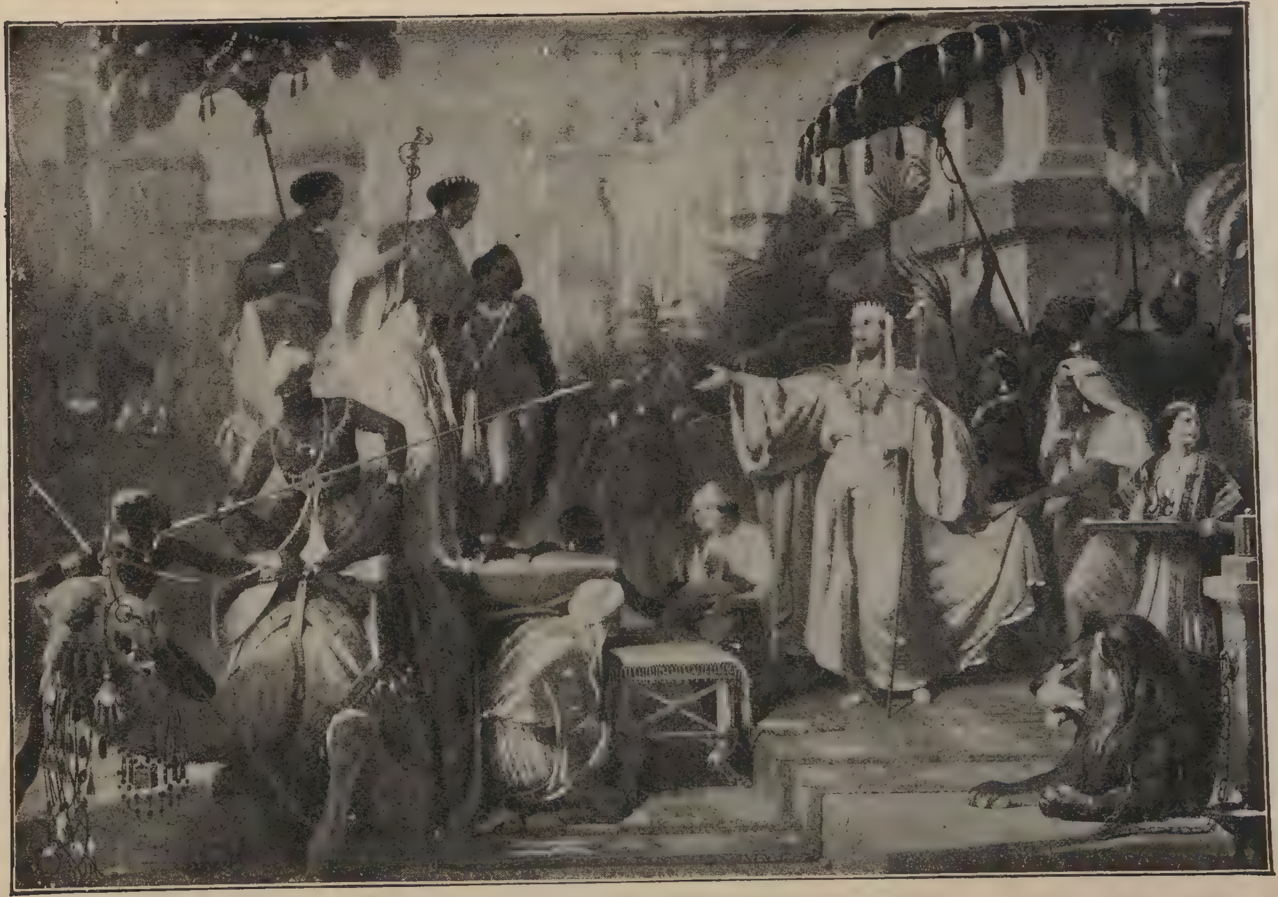
One night, after the Temple was finished, the Lord appeared to Sŏl′o-mon in a dream for the second time. And the Lord said to Sŏl′o-mon, "I have heard the prayer which you have offered to me, and I have made this house holy. It shall be my house, and I will dwell there. And if you will walk before me as Dā′vid, your father, walked, doing my will, then your throne shall stand forever. But if you turn aside from following the Lord, then I will leave this house, and will turn from it, and will let the enemies of Ĭş′ra-el come and destroy this house that was built for me."

Story Twenty

THE LAST DAYS OF SOLOMON'S REIGN

I Kings x : 1, to xi : 43.

UNDER King Sŏl′o-mon the land of Ĭş′ra-el arose to greatness as never before and never afterwards. All the countries around Ĭş′ra-el, and some that were far away, sent their princes to visit Sŏl′o-mon. And every one who saw him wondered at his wisdom and his skill to answer hard questions. It was said that King Sŏl′o-mon was the wisest man in all the world. He wrote many of the wise sayings in the Book of Proverbs, and many more that have been lost. He wrote more than a thousand songs. He spoke of trees,



THE QUEEN OF SHÉ′BȦ COMES TO VISIT SŎL′O-MON.

and of animals, and of birds, and of fishes. From many lands people came to see Sŏl′o-mon's splendor in living and to listen to his wise words.

In a land more than a thousand miles from Jė-ru̥′să-lĕm, on the south of Ȧ′rā′bĭ-ȧ, in the land of Shē′bȧ, the queen heard of Sŏl′o-mon's wisdom. She left her home, with a great company of her nobles, riding on camels and bearing rich gifts; and she came to visit King Sŏl′o-mon. The queen of Shē′bȧ brought to Sŏl′o-mon many hard questions, and she told him all that was in her heart. Sŏl′o-mon answered all her questions, and showed her all the glory of his palace, and his throne, and his servants, and the richness of his table, and the steps by which he went up from his palace to the house of the Lord. And when she had heard and seen all, she said:

"All that I have heard in my own land of your wisdom and your greatness was true. But I did not believe it until I came and saw your kingdom. And not half was told me; for your wisdom and your splendor are far beyond what I had heard. Happy are those who are always before you to hear your wisdom! Blessed be the Lord thy God, who has set thee on the throne of Ĭş′ra-el!"

And the queen of Shē′bȧ gave to Sŏl′o-mon great treasures of gold, and sweet-smelling spices, and perfumes; and Sŏl′o-mon also made to her rich presents. Then she went back to her own land.

Sŏl′o-mon's great palace, where he lived in state, stood on the southern slope of Mount Mô-rī′ah, a little lower than the Temple. Its pillars of cedar were very many, so that they stood like a forest; and on that account it was called "The House of the Forest of Lĕb′a-non." From this palace a wide staircase of stone led up to the Temple, and Sŏl′o-mon and his princes walked up these stairs when they went to worship.

But there was a dark side as well as a bright side to the reign of Sŏl′o-mon. His palaces, and the walled cities that he built to protect his kingdom on all sides, and the splendor of his court, cost much money. To pay for these he laid heavy taxes upon his people, and from all the tribes he compelled many of the men to work on buildings, to become soldiers in his army, to labor in his fields, and to serve in his household. Before the close of Sŏl′o-mon's reign the cry of the people rose up against Sŏl′o-mon and his rule, on account of the heavy burdens that he had laid upon the land.

Sŏl′o-mon was very wise in affairs of the world, but he had no feeling for the poor of the land, nor did he love God with all his heart. He chose for his queen a daughter of Phā′raōh, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt, and he built for her a splendid palace. And he married many other women who were the daughters of kings. These women had worshipped idols in their own homes, and to please them, Sŏl′o-mon built on the Mount of Ŏl′ĭves a temple of idols, in full view of the Temple of the Lord. So images of Bā′al, and the Ăsh′ē′rah, and of Chē′mŏsh, the idol of the Mō′ab-ītes, and of Mō′lech, the idol of the Ăm mon-ītes, stood on the hill in front of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm; and to these images King Sŏl′o-mon himself offered sacrifices. How great was the shame of the good men in Ĭş′ra-el when they saw their king surrounded by idol-priests, and bowing down upon his face before images of stone!

The Lord was very angry with Sŏl′o-mon for all this, and the Lord said to Sŏl′o-mon, "Since you have done these wicked things, and have not kept your promise to serve me, and because you have turned aside from my commands, I will surely take away the kingdom of Ĭş′ra-el from your son, and will give it to one of your servants. But for the sake of your father, Dā′vid, who loved me and obeyed my commands, I will not take away from your son all the kingdom, but I will leave to him, and to his children after him, one tribe."

The servant of King Sŏl′o-mon, of whom the Lord spoke, was a young man of the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, named Jĕr-o-bō′am. He was a very able man, and in the building of one of Sŏl′o-mon's castles he had charge over all the work done by the men of his tribe. One day a prophet of the Lord, named Ȧ-hī′jah, met the young Jĕr-o-bō′am as he was going out of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. Ȧ-hī′jah took off his own mantle, which was a new one, and tore it into twelve pieces. Ten of these pieces he gave to Jĕr-o-bō′am, saying to him:

"Take these ten pieces, for thus saith the Lord, the God of Ĭş′ra-el, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Sŏl′o-mon's son, and will give ten tribes to you. But Sŏl′o-mon's son shall have one tribe for my servant Dā′vid's sake, and for the sake of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. You shall reign over ten of the tribes of Ĭş′ra-el, and shall have all that you desire. And if you will do my will, saith the Lord, then I will be with you, and will give to your children and children's children to rule long over this land."

When King Sŏl′o-mon heard what the prophet Ȧ-hī′jah had said and done, he tried to kill Jĕr-o-bō′am. But Jĕr-o-bō′am fled into Ē′ġy̆pt, and stayed there until the end of Sŏl′o-mon's reign.

Sŏl′o-mon reigned in all forty years, as Dā′vid had reigned before him. He died, and was buried on Mount Zī′ŏn, and Rē-ho-bō′am, his son, became king in his place.

Sometimes the reign of Sŏl′o-mon has been called "the Golden Age of Ĭs̱′ra-el," because it was a time of peace, and of wide rule, and of great riches. But it would be better to call it "the Gilded Age," because under all the show and glitter of Sŏl′o-mon's reign there were many evil things, a king allowing and helping the worship of idols, a court filled with idle and useless nobles, and the poor of the land heavily burdened with taxes and labor. The empire of Sŏl′o-mon was ready to fall in pieces, and the fall soon came.

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

Part Fourth

Stories of the Kingdom of Israel

Story One

THE BREAKING UP OF A GREAT KINGDOM

I Kings xii : 1 to 24; II Chronicles x : 1 to 19.

WHEN the strong rule of King Sŏl'o-mon was ended by his death, and his weak son, Rē-ho-bō'am, followed him as king, all the people of Ĭş'ra-el rose as one man against the heavy burdens which Sŏl'o-mon had laid upon the land. They would not allow Rē-ho-bō'am to be crowned king in Jė-rụ'sȧ-lĕm, but made him come to Shē'chem, in the tribe-land of Ē'phră-ĭm, and in the center of the country. The people sent for Jĕr-o-bō'am, who was in Ē'ġȳpt, and he became their leader. They said to Rē-ho-bō'am, "Your father, Sŏl'o-mon, laid upon us heavy burdens of taxes and of work. If you will promise to take away our load, and make the taxes and the work lighter, then we will receive you as king, and will serve you."

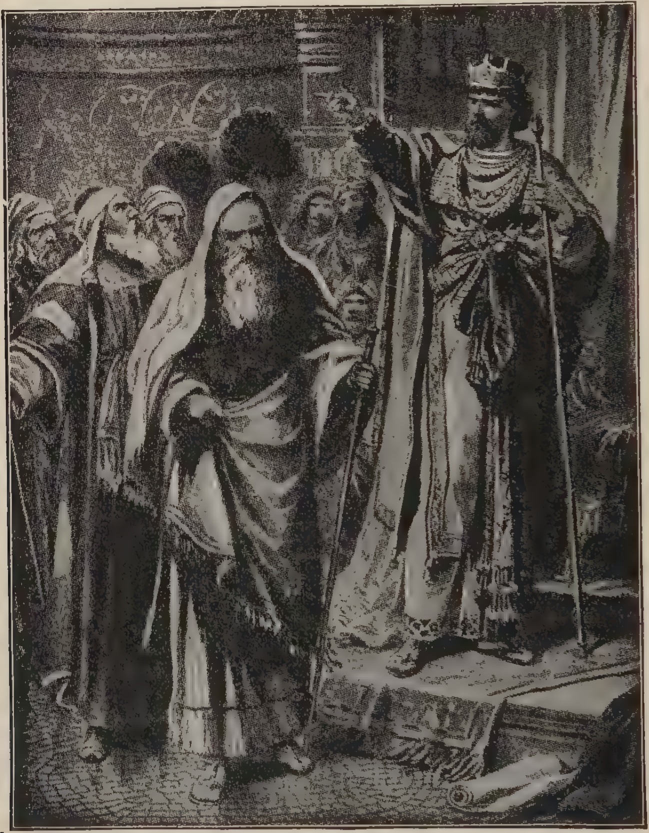
"Give me three days," said Rē-ho-bō'am, "and then I will tell you what I will do."

So Jĕr-o-bō'am and the people waited for three days, while Rē'ho-bō'am talked with the rulers and with his friends. Rē-ho-bō'am first called together the old men who had stood before the throne of Sŏl'o-mon and had helped him in his rule. He said to these men, "What answer shall I give to this people, who ask to have their burdens made light?"

And these old men said to King Rē-ho-bō'am, "If you will be wise to-day, and yield to the people, and speak good words to them, then they will submit to you, and will serve you always. Tell them that you will take off the heavy burdens, and that you will rule the land in kindness."

But Rē-ho-bō′am would not heed the advice of these wise old men. He talked with the young princes who had grown up with him in the palace, and who cared nothing for the people or their troubles; and he said to these young men, "The people are asking to have their heavy burdens taken away. What shall I say to them?"

And the young nobles said to Rē-ho-bō′am, "Say to the people this, 'My father made your burdens heavy, but I will make them heavier still. My father beat you with whips, but I will sting you with scorpions. My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist.'"


RĒ-HŌ-BŌ′AM SPOKE HARSHLY TO THE PEOPLE.

On the third day Jĕr-o-bō′am and all the people came to Rē-ho-bō′am for his answer. And the foolish young king did not follow the good advice of the old men who knew the people and their needs. He did as the haughty young princes told him to do, and spoke harshly to the people, and said, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it, and make it heavier. You will find my little finger thicker than my father's waist. My father struck you with whips, but I will sting you with scorpions." Then the people of Ĭş′ra-el were very angry against the king. They said, "Why should we submit any longer to the house of Dā′vid? Let us leave the family of Dā′vid, and choose a king of our own. To your tents, O Ĭş′ra-el! Now, Rē-ho-bō′am, son of Dā′vid, care for your own house!"

Thus in one day ten of the twelve tribes of Ĭş′ra-el broke away forever from the rule of King Rē-ho-bō′am and the house of Dā′vid. They made Jĕr-o-bō′am, of the tribe of Ē′phră-ĭm, their king. In his kingdom was all the land northward from Bĕth′=el to Dăn, and also all the tribes on the east of the river Jôr′dan. His kingdom being the larger, was called Ĭş′ra-el; but it was also called "the kingdom of the Ten Tribes," and because Ē′phră-ĭm was its leading tribe, it was often spoken of as "the land of Ē′phră-ĭm."

When Rē-ho-bō′am saw that he had lost his kingdom, he made haste to save his life by fleeing away from Shē′chem. He rode in his chariot quickly to Jė-rụ-să′lĕm, where the people were his friends; and there he ruled as king, but only over the tribe of Jū′dah and as much of Bĕn′ja-mĭn as was south of Bĕth′=el. The tribe of Sĭm′e-on had once lived on the south of Jū′dah, but some of its people were lost among the people of Jū′dah, and others among the Arabs of the desert, so that it was no longer a separate tribe.

Rē-ho-bō′am ruled over the mountain country on the west of the Dead Sea, but he had no control over the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭne cities on the plain beside the Great Sea. So the kingdom of Jū′dah, as it was called, was less than one-third the size of the kingdom of Ĭş′ra-el, or the Ten Tribes.

Dā′vid had conquered, and Sŏl′o-mon had ruled, not only the land of Ĭş′ra-el, but Sўr′ĭ-ȧ on the north of Ĭş′ra-el, reaching up to the great river Eū-phrā′tēş, and Ăm′mon by the desert on the east, and Mō′ab on the east of the Dead Sea, and Ē′dom on the south. When the kingdom was divided, all the empire of Sŏl′o-mon was broken up. The Sўr′ĭ-anş formed a kingdom of their own, having Dȧ-măs′cus as its chief city. The Ăm′mon-ītes, the Mō′ab-ītes, and the Ē′dom-ītes, all had their own kings, though the king of Mō′ab was for a time partly under the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and the king of Ē′dom partly under the king of Jū′dah. So the great and strong empire founded by Dā′vid, and held by Sŏl′o-mon, fell apart, and became six small, struggling states.

Yet all this was by the will of the Lord, who did not wish Ĭş′ra-el to become a great nation, but a good people. The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes were growing rich, and were living for the world, while God desired them to be his people, and to worship him only. So, when Rē-ho-bō′am undertook to gather an army to fight the Ten Tribes, and to bring them under his rule, God sent a prophet to Rē-ho-bō′am, who said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up and fight against your brothers, the children of Ĭş′ra-el. Return every man to his house; for it is God's will that there should be two kingdoms."

And the men of Jū′dah obeyed the word of the Lord, and left the Ten Tribes to have their own kingdom and their own king.

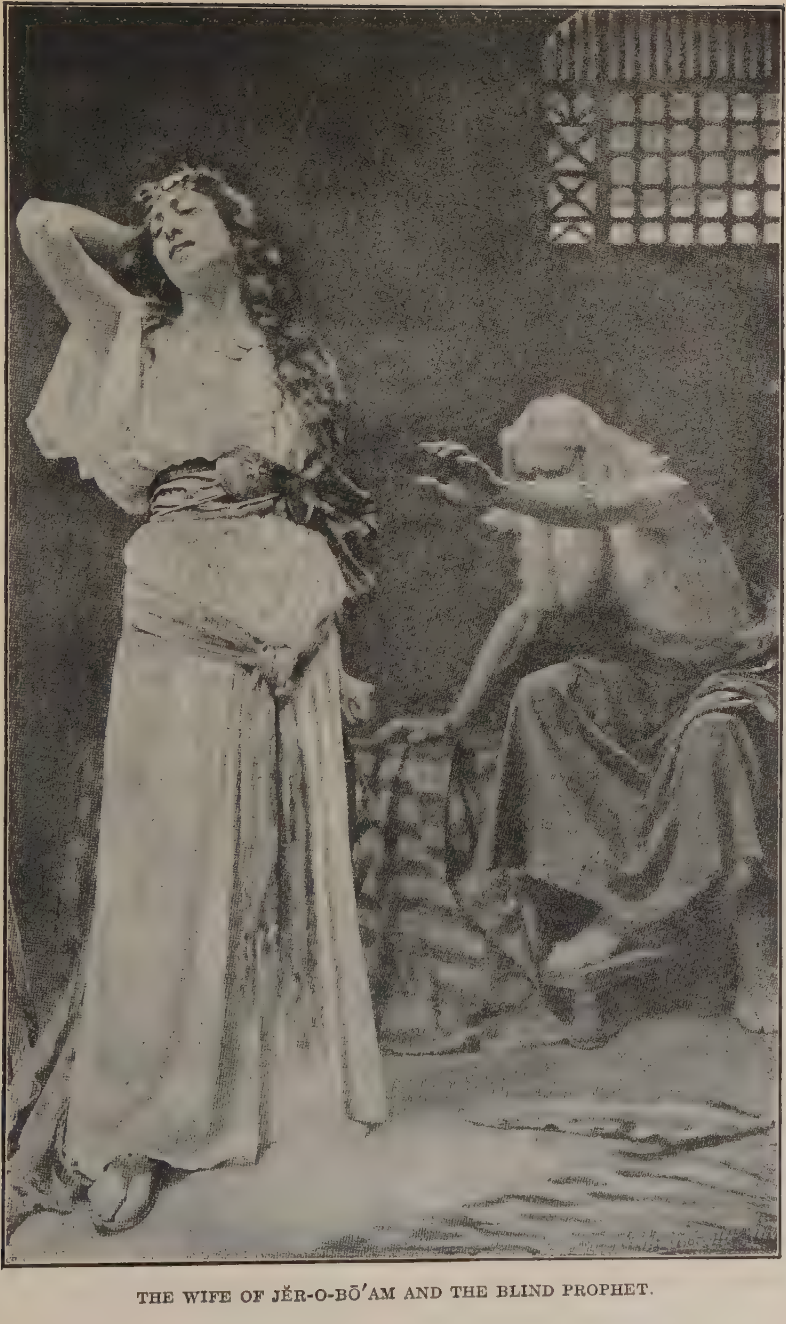
Story Two

THE KING WHO LED ISRAEL TO SIN, AND THE PROPHET WHO WAS SLAIN BY A LION

I Kings xii : 25, to xiv : 20; xv : 25 to 32.

THE Lord had told Jĕr-o-bō′am that he should become king over the Ten Tribes; and the Lord had promised Jĕr-o-bō′am that if he would serve the Lord, and do his will, then his kingdom would become great, and his descendants, those who should come after him, should sit long on the throne. But Jĕr-o-bō′am, though wise in worldly matters, was not faithful to the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el.

He saw that his people, though separated from the rule of King Rē-ho-bō′am, still went up to Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm to worship in the Temple, because there was the only altar in all the land. Jĕr-o-bō′am said to himself:



THE WIFE OF JĔR-O-BŌ′AM AND THE BLIND PROPHET.

"If my people go up to worship at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, then after a time they will become the friends of Rē-ho-bō′am and his people; and then they will leave me, or perhaps kill me, and let Rē-ho′bō-am rule again over all the land. I will build places for worship and altars in my own kingdom; and then my people will not need to go abroad to worship."

Jĕr-o-bō′am forgot that the Lord, who had given him the kingdom, could care for him and keep him, if he should be faithful to the Lord. But because he would not trust the Lord, he did that which was very evil. He chose two places, Bĕth′=el in the south, on the road to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, and Dăn far in the north; and made these places of worship for his people. And for each place he made a calf of gold, and set it up; and he said to the people of Ĭș′ra-el:

"It is too far for you to go up to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to worship. Here are gods for you, at Bĕth′=el and at Dăn. These are the gods which brought you up out of the land of Ē′ġy̆pt. Come and worship these gods."

And as the priests of the tribe of Lē′vī would not serve in Jĕr-o-bō′am's idol-temples, he took men out of all the tribes, some of them common and low men, and made them his priests. And all through the land, upon hills and high places, Jĕr-o-bō′am caused images to be set up, to lead the people in worshipping idols.

In the fall of the year there was held a feast to the Lord in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, to which the people went from all the land. Jĕr-o-bō′am made a great feast at Bĕth′=el, a few weeks later than the feast at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, in order to draw people to his idol-temple at Bĕth′=el, and to keep them away from the Temple of the Lord at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. At this feast King Jĕr-o-bō′am went up to the idol-altar at Bĕth′=el, and burned incense, which was a sweet-smelling smoke, made by burning certain gums. Thus Jĕr-o-bō′am led his people away from the Lord to idols; and ever after this, when his name is mentioned in the Bible, he is spoken of as "Jĕr-o-bō′am, who made Ĭș′ra-el to sin."

On a day when Jĕr-o-bō′am was offering incense at the altar, a man of God, a prophet, came from Jū′dah; and he cried out against the altar, saying:

"O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold, in the time to come there shall rise up a man of the house of Dā′vid, Jō-sī′ah by name. And Jō-sī′ah shall burn upon this altar the bones of the priests that have offered sacrifices to idols in this place. And this altar and this temple shall be destroyed."

The prophet from Jū′dah also said to Jĕr-o-bō′am, "I will prove to you that I am speaking in the power of the Lord; and this shall be the sign. This altar shall fall apart, and the ashes upon it shall be poured out."

When King Jĕr-o-bō′am heard this, he was very angry. He stretched out his arm toward the prophet, and called to his guards, saying, "Take hold of that man!"

And instantly the hand which Jĕr-o-bō′am held out toward the prophet, dried up and became helpless. And as if by an earthquake the altar before which the king stood was torn apart, and the ashes fell out upon the ground. Then the king saw that this was the work of the Lord. He said to the prophet, "Pray to the Lord your God for me, that he may make my hand well again."

Then the prophet prayed to the Lord, and the Lord heard his prayer, and made the king's hand well once more. Then King Jĕr-o-bō′am said to the prophet, "Come home with me, and dine, and rest; and I will give you a reward."

And the man of God said to the king:

"If you would give me half of your house, I will not go to your home, nor eat bread, nor drink water in this place. For the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Eat no bread, and drink no water in this place; and go to your home in the land of Jū′dah by another way.'"

So the man of God left Bĕth′=el by a road different from that by which he came, and went toward his own home in the land of Jū′dah.

There was living in Bĕth′=el at that time another prophet, an old man. His sons told him of the coming of the man of God from Jū′dah, what he had said, and what the Lord had wrought. The old man learned from his sons which road the prophet had taken, and followed after him, and found him resting under an oak-tree. He said to him:

"Are you the man of God that came from Jū′dah?"

And he said, "I am." Then said the old prophet of Bĕth′=el to him, "Come home with me, and have supper with me."

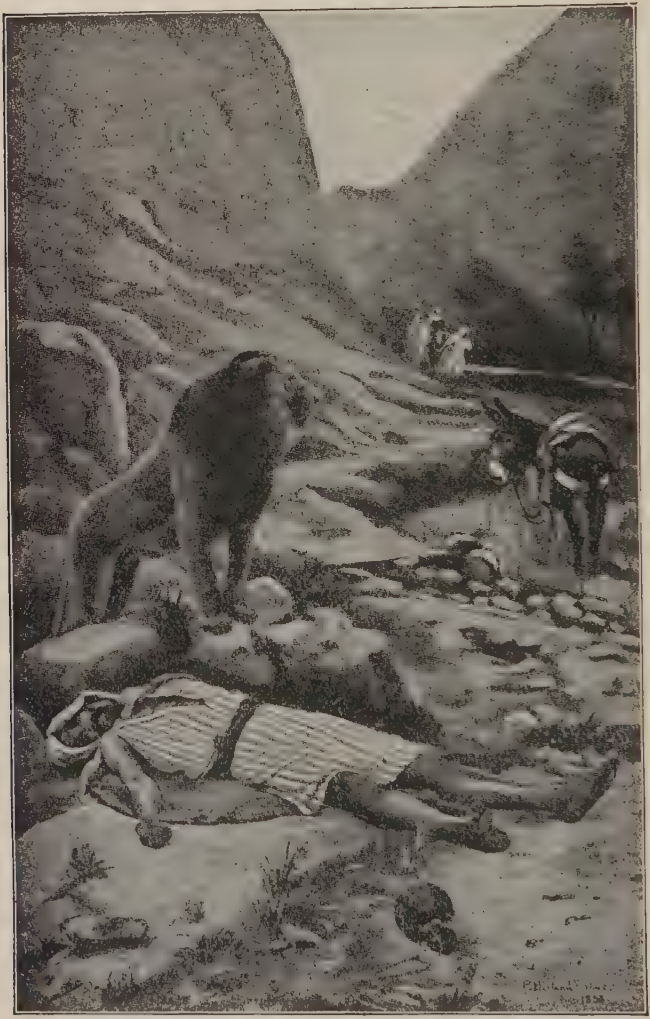
But the man of God said to him, "The Lord has commanded me not to eat bread or drink water in this place; and I must therefore go back to my own home in the land of Jū′dah."

Then the old man said:

"I am a prophet of the Lord as you are; and an angel spoke to me from the Lord, saying, 'Bring the prophet from Jū'dah back to your house, and let him eat and drink with you.'"

Now this was not true, It was a wicked lie. Then the prophet from Jū'dah went home with him, and took a meal at his house. This also was not right, for he should have obeyed what the Lord had said to him, even though another man claimed to have heard a different message from the Lord.

And even while they were sitting at the table, a word came from the Lord to the old prophet who had told the lie; and he cried out to the prophet from Jū'dah, saying:


A LION CAME OUT AND KILLED THE PROPHET.

"Thus saith the Lord, 'Because you have disobeyed my command, and have come back to this place, and have eaten bread and drunk water here, therefore you shall die and your body shall not be buried in the tomb with your fathers.'"

After dinner the prophet started again to ride upon his ass back to his own home. And on the way a lion came out, and killed him. But the lion did not eat the man's body. He stood beside it, and the ass stood by it also. And this was told to the old prophet whose lies had led him to disobey the Lord. Then the old prophet came, and took up his body, and laid it in his own tomb, and mourned over him. And he said to his sons:

"When I am dead, bury me beside the body of the prophet from the land of Jū′dah. For I know that what he spoke as the message of God against the altar at Bĕth′-el shall surely come to pass."

At one time the child of King Jĕr-o-bō′am was taken very ill: and his mother, the queen, went to the prophet Ȧ-hī′jah, the one who had promised the kingdom to Jĕr-o-bō′am, who was now an old man and blind, if the child would be well again. But Ȧ-hī′jah said to her: "Tell King Jĕr-o-bō′am that thus saith the Lord to him:

"You have done evil worse than any before you; and have made graven images, and have cast the Lord behind your back. Therefore the Lord will bring evil upon you and upon your house. Your sick child shall die, and every other child of yours shall be slain; and your family shall be swept away. The dogs shall eat the bodies of your children in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat these that die in the field. And in times to come God shall smite Ĭş′ra-el, and shall carry them into a land far away, because of the idols which they have worshipped."

And after this Jĕr-o-bō′am died, and his son Nā′dăb began to reign in his place. But after two years Bā′a-shȧ, one of his servants, rose up against Nā′dăb, and killed him, and made himself king over Ĭş′ra-el. And Bā′a-shȧ killed every child of Jĕr-o-bō′am, and left not one son or daughter of Jĕr-o-bō′am alive, as Ȧ-hī′jah the prophet had said.

So, although Jĕr-o-bō′am was made king, as God had promised him, it came to pass that the kingdom was taken away from his family, because he did not obey the word of the Lord, but led his people into sin.

Story Three

THE PROPHET WHOSE PRAYER RAISED A BOY TO LIFE

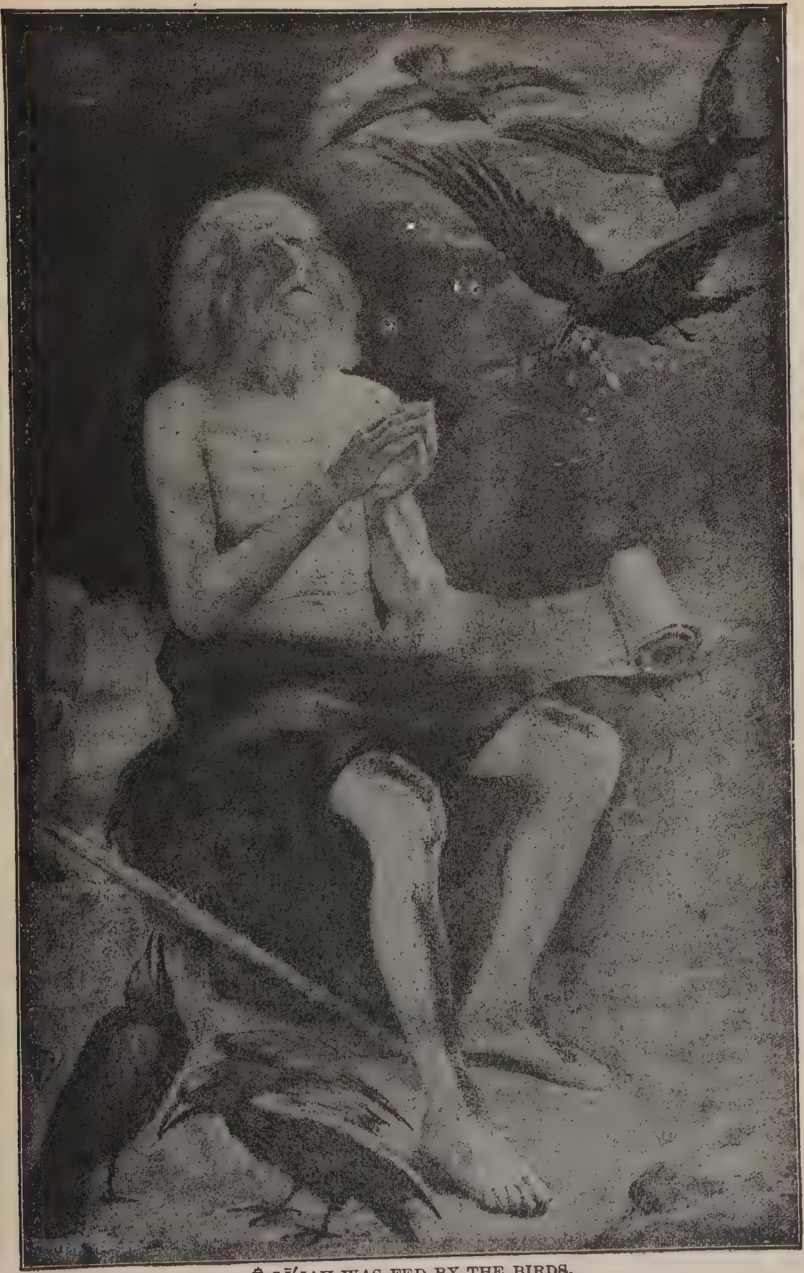
I Kings xv : 33, to xvii : 24.

AFTER Jĕr-o-bō′am and Nā′dăb his son, Bā′a-shȧ reigned as king of Ĭş′ra-el. But he did as Jĕr-o-bō′am had done before him, disobeying the word of the Lord and worshipping idols. Therefore the Lord sent a prophet to Bā′a-shȧ, saying, "Thus saith the Lord to Bā′a-shȧ, king of Ĭş′ra-el, I lifted you up from the dust and made you the prince over my people Ĭş′ra-el. But you have walked in the way of Jĕr-o-bō′am, and have made Ĭş′ra-el sin. Therefore your family shall be destroyed, like the family of Jĕr-o-bō′am."

When Bā′a-shȧ died, his son Ē′lah became king; but while he was drinking wine and making himself drunk, his servant, Zĭm′rī, came in and killed him, and killed also all his family, and all the house of Bā′a-shȧ, so that not one was left.

Zĭm′rī tried to make himself king, but his reign was short, only seven days. Ŏm′rī, the general of the Ĭş′ra-el-īte army, made war upon him, and shut him up in his palace. When Zĭm′rī found that he could not escape, he set his palace on fire and was burned up with it. After this there was war in Ĭş′ra-el between Ŏm′rī and another man, named Tĭb′nī, each trying to win the kingdom. But at last Tĭb′nī was slain, and Ŏm′rī became king.

Ŏm′rī was not a good man, for he worshipped idols, like the kings before him. But he was a strong king, and made his kingdom great. He made peace with the kingdom of Jū′dah, for there had been war between Jū′dah and Ĭş′ra-el ever since Jĕr-o-bō′am had founded the kingdom. Ŏm′rī bought a hill in the middle of the land, from a man named Shē′mẽr; and on the hill he built a city which he named Să′mā′rĭ-ȧ, after the name of the man from whom he had bought the hill. The city of Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ became in Ĭş′ra-el



Ē-LĪ'JAH WAS FED BY THE BIRDS.

what Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm was in Jū'dah, the chief city and capital. Before the time of Ŏm'rī the kings of Ĭş'ra-el had lived in different cities, sometimes in Shē'chem, and sometimes in Tĩr'zah; but after Ŏm'rī all the kings lived in Sȧ-mā'rĭ-ȧ; so that the kingdom itself was often called "the kingdom of Sȧ-mā'rĭ-ȧ."

After Ŏm'rī came his son, Ā'hăb, as king of Ĭş'ra-el, reigning in Sȧ-mā'rĭ-ȧ. He was worse than any of the kings before him. Ā'hăb took for his wife Jĕz'e-bĕl, the daughter of the king of Zī'dŏn, on the coast of the Great Sea; and Jĕz'e-bĕl brought into Ĭş'ra-el the worship of Bā'al and of the Ăsh-ē'rah, which was far more wicked than even the worship of the golden calves at Bĕth'=el and Dan. And Jĕz'e-bĕl was so bitter against the worship of the Lord God of Ĭş'ra-el that she sought out the prophets of the Lord everywhere, and slew them; so that to save their lives the prophets hid in caves among the mountains.

You remember that when Jŏsh'u-ȧ destroyed and burned the city of Jĕr'ĭ-chō, he spoke a curse, in the name of the Lord, upon any man who should ever build again the walls of Jĕr'ĭ-chō. (See Story Two in Part Second.) In the days of Ā'hăb, king of Ĭş'ra-el, five hundred years after Jŏsh'u-ȧ, the walls of Jĕr'ĭ-chō were built by a man named Hī'el, who came from Bĕth'=el, the place of the idol temple. When he laid the foundation of the wall his oldest son, Ȧ-bī'ram, died; and when he set up the gates of the city his youngest son, Sē'gu̥b, died. Thus came to pass the word of the Lord spoken by Jŏsh'u-ȧ.

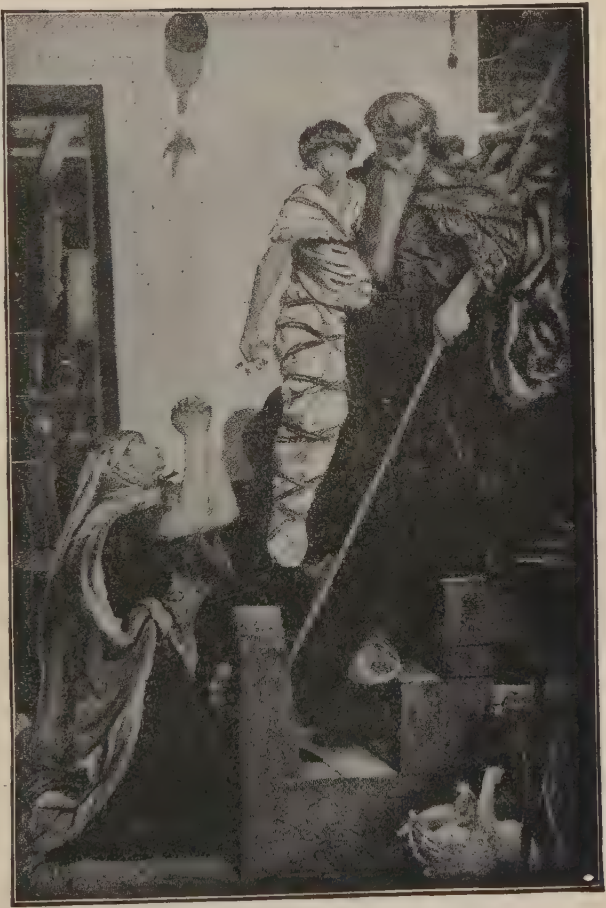
In the reign of King Ā'hăb a great prophet suddenly rose up, named Ē̇-lī'jah. He came from the land of Ḡĭl'e-ăd, beyond the river Jôr'dan, and he lived alone out in the wilderness. His clothing was a mantle of skin, and his hair and beard were long and rough. Without any warning, Ē̇-lī'jah came into the presence of King Ā'hăb, and said, "As the Lord God of Ĭş'ra-el lives, before whom I stand, there shall not fall upon the ground any dew or rain until I call for it."

And then he went away as suddenly as he had come. At the Lord's command he hid himself in a wild place by the brook Chē'rĭth, which flows down from the mountains into the river Jôr'dan. There he drank of the water in the brook, and every day the wild birds, the ravens, brought him food.

It came to pass as Ē̇-lī'jah had said, that no rain fell upon the land, and there was not even any dew upon the grass. Every day the brook from which Ê-lī'jah drank grew smaller, until at last it was dry, and there was no water. Then the Lord spoke to Ê-lī'jah again, and said, "Rise up, and go to Zăr'e-phăth, which is near to Zī'dŏn, by the Great Sea, on the north of the land of Ĭş'ra-el. I have commanded a widow woman there to care for you."

So Ê-lī'jah left the brook Chē'rĭth and walked northward through the land until he came near to the city of Zăr'e-phăth. There, beside the gate of the city, he saw a woman dressed as a widow picking up sticks. Ê-lī'jah said to her, "Will you bring to me some water, that I may drink?"

She went to bring him the water, and Ê-lī'jah said again, "Bring me also, I pray you, a little piece of bread to eat."



Ê-LĪ'JAH BRINGS THE BOY TO HIS MOTHER.

And the woman said to Ê-lī'jah, "As sure as the Lord your God lives, I have not in the house even a loaf of bread; but only one handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in a bottle; and now I am gathering a few sticks to make a fire, that I may bake it for me and my son; and when we have eaten it, there is nothing left for us but to die."

Then the word of the Lord came to Ê-lī′jah, and he said to the woman, "Fear not; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake, and bring it to me, and afterward make for yourself and your son. For thus saith the Lord, the God of Ĭs′ra-el, 'The barrel of meal shall not waste nor the bottle of oil fail, until the day when the Lord sends rain upon the earth.'"

And the widow woman believed Ê-lī′jah's word. She took from her barrel the meal and from her bottle the oil, and made a little cake for the prophet, and then found enough left for herself and for her son. And the barrel always had meal in it, and the bottle held oil every day. And the prophet, and the woman, and her son had food as long as they needed it.

After this, one day the son of the widow was taken very ill, and his illness was so great that there was no breath left in him. The boy's mother said to Ê-lī′jah, "O man of God! have you come here to cause my son to die?"

And Ê-lī′jah said to her, "Give me your son."

And Ê-lī′jah carried the boy up to his own room, and laid him on the bed. Then he cried to the Lord, and said, "O Lord God, hast thou brought trouble upon this woman, by taking away the life of her son?"

Then he stretched himself upon the child's body three times, and cried to the Lord again, "O Lord God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again!"

And the Lord heard Ê-lī′jah's prayer, and the child became living once more. Then Ê-lī′jah carried the living boy back to his mother; and she said, "Now I am sure that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord which you speak is the truth."

Story Four

THE PRAYER THAT WAS ANSWERED IN FIRE

I Kings xviii : 1 to 46.

THREE years passed after Ê-lī′jah gave the message of the Lord to King Ā′hăb, and in all that time no rain fell upon the land of Ĭs̱′ra-el. Everywhere the brooks ceased to flow, the springs became dry, the ground was parched, and the fields gave no harvest. There was no grass for the cattle and the flocks, and there was scarcely any food for the people.

King Ā′hăb was in great trouble. He knew that Ê-lī′jah had the power to call down rain; but Ê-lī′jah was nowhere to be found. He sent men to search for him everywhere in the land, and he asked the kings of the nations around to look for him in their countries; for he hoped to persuade the prophet to set the land free from the long drought by calling for rain.

When the land was at its worst, in the third year, Ā′hăb called the chief of his servants, the man who stood next to the king. His name was Ō-ba-dī′ah, and, unlike Ā′hăb, he was a good man, worshipping the Lord, and trying to do right. Once, when Queen Jĕz′e-bĕl sought to kill all the prophets of the Lord, Ō-ba-dī′ah hid a hundred of them in two caves, fifty in each cave, and gave them food, and kept them in safety.

Ā′hăb said to Ō-ba-dī′ah, "Let us go through all the land, you in one part, and I in another, and look for running streams and fountains of water. Perhaps we can find some water, enough to save a part of the horses and mules, so that we may not lose them all."

And as Ō-ba-dī′ah was going through his part of the country, looking for water, suddenly Ê-lī′jah met him. Ō-ba-dī′ah knew Ê-lī′jah at once. He fell on his face before him, and said, "Is this my lord Ê-lī′jah?"

And Ê-lī'jah answered him, "Yes, it is I, Ê-lī'jah. Go and tell your master that Ê-lī'jah is here."

And Ō-ba-dī'ah said, "Oh, my lord, what wrong have I done, that you would cause King Ā'hăb to kill me? For there is not a land where Ā'hăb has not sent for you; and now when I go to tell him that you are here, the Spirit of the Lord will send you away to some other place, and then if Ā'hăb cannot find you he will be angry at me, and kill me. Do you not know that I fear the Lord, and serve him?" And Ê-lī'jah said, "As the Lord God lives, I will surely show myself to King Ā'hăb to-day."

MOUNT CÄR'MEL.

So Ō-ba-dī'ah went to meet Ā'hăb, and told him of Ê-lī'jah's coming; and Ā'hăb went to meet Ê-lī'jah. When Ā'hăb saw Ê-lī'jah, he said to him, "Are you here, you that have brought all this trouble upon Ĭş'ra-el?"

And Ê-lī'jah answered the king, "I am not the one that has brought trouble upon Ĭş'ra-el. It is you, and your house; for you have turned away from the commands of the Lord, and have worshipped the images of Bā′al. Now send and bring all the people to Mount Cär′mel, and with them the four hundred prophets of Bā′al, and the four hundred prophets of the Ăsh-ē′rah, who ate at Jĕz′e-bĕl's table."

So Ā′hăb did as Ḗ-lī′jah commanded, and brought all the people to Mount Cär′mel, which stands by the Great Sea. And Ḗ-lī′jah stood before all the multitude, and he said to them, "How long will you go halting and limping back and forth between two sides, not choosing either? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Bā′al is God, then follow him."

And the people had not a word to say. Then Ḗ-lī′jah spoke again, and said, "I am alone, the only prophet of the Lord here to-day; but Bā′al's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Now, let the people give us two young oxen, one for Bā′al's prophets, and one for me. Let the prophets of Bā′al take one ox, and cut it up, and lay it on the altar on the wood. But let no fire be placed under it. And I will do the same; then you call on your god, and I will call on the Lord. And the God who sends down fire upon his altar, he shall be the God of Ĭş′ra-el."

And the people said, "What you have spoken is right. We will do as you say, and will see who is the true God."

Then the two oxen were brought, and one was cut in pieces and laid on the altar of Bā′al. The prophets of Bā′al stood around the altar, and cried aloud, "O Bā′al, hear us!" But there was no answer, nor any voice. After a time the worshippers of Bā′al became furious. They leaped and danced around the altar, and they cut themselves with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. And Ḗ-lī′jah laughed at them, and mocked them, calling out, "Call out louder, for surely he is a god! Perhaps he is sitting still and thinking, or he has gone on a journey; or perhaps he is asleep, and must be awaked!"

But it was all in vain. The middle of the afternoon came, and there was no answer. The altar stood with its offering, but no fire came upon it. Then Ḗ-lī′jah said to all the people, "Come near to me."

And they came near. He found an old altar to the Lord that had been thrown down, and he took twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes, and piled them up to form the altar anew. Around the altar he dug a trench, to carry away water. Then he cut wood, and laid it on the altar, and on the wood he placed the young ox, cut into pieces for a sacrifice. Then he said, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the offering."

The Great Sea was near at hand, in sight of all the people; and from it they brought four barrels of water, and poured it on the altar. He called upon them to do it again, and a third time, until the offering, and the wood, and the altar were soaked through and through, and the trench was filled with water.

Then, in the sight of all the people, Ē-lī′jah, the prophet, drew near, and stood all alone before the altar, and prayed in these words, "O Lord, the God of Ā′brā-hăm, of Ī′ṣaac, and of Ĭṣ′ra-el, let it be known this day that thou art God in Ĭṣ′ra-el, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may know that thou, Lord, art God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again to thyself."

Then the fire fell from the Lord, and burned up the offering, and the wood, and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they cried, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!" And Ē-lī′jah said to the people, "Seize the prophets of Bā′al; let not one of them escape!"

They took them all, four hundred and fifty men; and by Ē-lī′jah's command they brought them down to the dry bed of the brook Kī′shŏn, at the foot of the mountain; and there Ē-lī′jah caused them to be put to death, because they had led Ĭṣ′ra-el into sin.

Ā′hăb, the king, was present upon Mount Cär′mel, and saw all that had been done. Ē-lī′jah now said to Ā′hăb, "Rise up; eat and drink; for there is a sound of a great rain."

While Ā′hăb was eating and drinking, Ē-lī′jah was praying upon Mount Cär′mel. He bowed down, with his face between his knees, and prayed to the Lord to send rain. After a time he sent his servant up to the top of the mountain, saying, "Go up and look toward the sea."

The servant went up, and came back, saying, "I can see nothing."

Ē-lī′jah sent him up seven times; and at the seventh time his servant said, "I see a cloud rising out of the sea as small as a man's hand."

Then Ê-lī′jah sent to Ā′hăb, saying, "Hasten; make ready your chariot before the rain stops you."

In a little while the sky was covered with black clouds, and there came a great rain. And Ā′hăb rode in his chariot to his palace at Jĕz′re-el, on the eastern side of the great plain. And the power of the Lord was on Ê-lī′jah, and he ran before Ā′hăb's chariot to the gate of the city.

Ê-LĪ′JAH'S SACRIFICE ON MOUNT CÄR′MEL.

Thus in one day a great victory was wrought for the Lord God, and the power of Bā′al was thrown down.

Story Five

THE VOICE THAT SPOKE TO ELIJAH IN THE MOUNT

I Kings xix : 1 to 21.

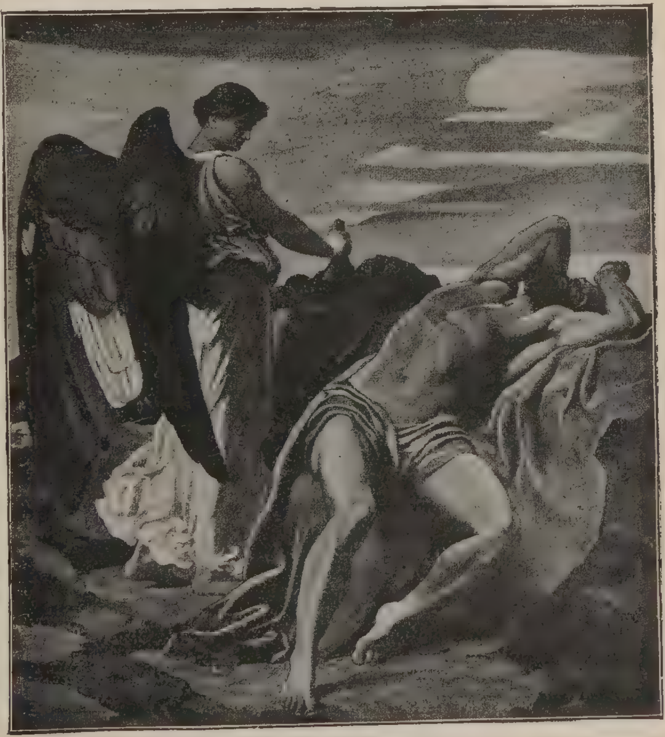
WHEN King Ā'hăb told his wife, Queen Jĕz'e-bĕl, of all that Ê-lī'jah had done; how the fire had fallen from heaven upon his altar, and how he had slain all the prophets of Bā'al with the sword, Queen Jĕz'e-bĕl was very angry. She sent a messenger to Ê-lī'jah with these words:

"May the gods do to me as you have done to the prophets of Bā'al, if I do not by to-morrow kill you, as you have killed them!"

Ê-lī'jah saw that his life was in danger, and he found that not one man in all the kingdom dared to stand by him against the hate of Queen Jĕz'e-bĕl. He rose up, and ran away to save his life. He went southward to the land of Jū'dah, but did not feel safe even there. He hastened across Jū'dah southward to Bē'er-shē-bȧ, which is on the edge of the desert, eighty miles away from Sȧ-mā'rĭ-ȧ. But not even here did Ê-lī'jah dare to stay, for he still feared the wrath of Queen Jĕz'e-bĕl. He left his servant at Bē'er-shē'bȧ, and went out alone into the desert, over which the children of Ĭş'ra-el had wandered five hundred years before. After he had walked all day under the sun, and over the burning sand, he sat down to rest under a juniper-tree. He was tired, and hungry, and discouraged. He felt that his work had all been in vain, that in heart the people were still worshippers of Bā'al; and he felt, too, that he had shown weakness in running away from his place of duty in fear of Queen Jĕz'e-bĕl. Ê-lī'jah cried out to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, I have lived long enough! Take away my life, O Lord, for I am no better than my people!" Then, tired out, he lay down to sleep under the tree. But the Lord was very kind to Ê-lī'jah. While he was sleeping an angel touched him, and said, "Arise, and eat."

He opened his eyes, and saw beside him a little fire, with a loaf of bread baking upon it, and near it a bottle of water. He ate and drank, and then lay down to sleep again. A second time he felt the angel touch him, and he heard a voice say, "Arise, and eat; because the journey is too long for you."

He arose, and ate once more. Then he went on his way, and in the strength given him by that food he walked forty days through the desert. He came at last to Mount Hō′reb, the mountain where Mō′ṣeṣ saw the burning bush, and where God spoke forth the words of the Ten Commandments. Ê-lī′jah found a cave in the side of the mountain, and went into it to rest. While he was in the cave he heard God's voice speaking to him, and saying, "What are you doing here, Ĕ-lī′jah?"



AN ANGEL TOUCHED Ê-LĪ′JAH.

And Ê-lī′jah said to the Lord, "O Lord God, I have been very earnest for thee; for the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el have turned away from their promise to serve thee; they have thrown down thine altars, and have slain thy prophets with the sword; and now I, even I only am left; and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

Then the Lord said to Ê-lī′jah, "Go out and stand upon the mountain before the Lord."

Then, while Ê-lī′jah was standing upon the mountain, a great and strong wind swept by and tore the mountains apart, and broke the rocks in pieces; but the Lord was not in the wind. Then came an earthquake, shaking the mountains; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire passed by; but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was silence and stillness, and Ê-lī′jah heard a low, quiet voice which he knew was the voice of the Lord.

Then Ê-lī′jah wrapped his face in his mantle, for he feared to look upon the form of God, and he stood at the opening of the cave. The voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Ê-lī′jah?"

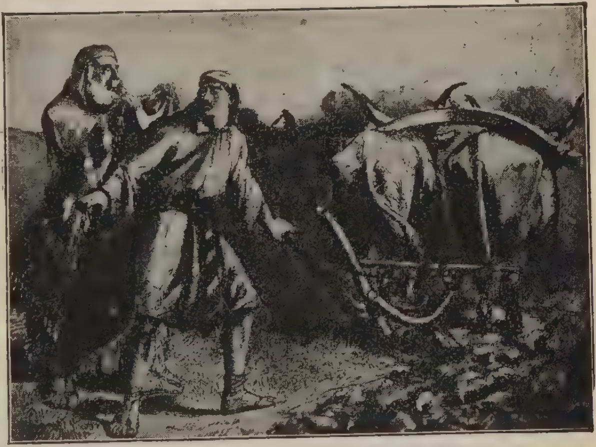
And Ê-lī′jah said, as he had said before, "O Lord, I have been very earnest for thee; for the people of Ĭş′ra-el have turned away from their promise to serve thee; they have thrown down thine altars, and have slain thy prophets with the sword; and now I, even I only, am left; and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

Then the Lord said to Ê-lī′jah, "Go back to the land from which you have come, and then go to the wilderness of Dȧ-măs′cus, and anoint Hăz′a-el to be king over Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ; and Jē′hū, the son of Nĭm′shī, you shall anoint to be king over Ĭş′ra-el; and Ê-lī′shȧ, the son of Shā′phat, of the village of Ā′bel-mė-hō′lah, in the land of Mȧ-năs′seh, west of Jôr′dan, you shall anoint to take your place as prophet. And it shall come to pass that those who escape from the sword of Hăz′a-el, Jē′hū shall slay, and those that escape from the sword of Jē′hū shall Ê-lī′shȧ slay. But there will be found some, even seven thousand men in Ĭş′ra-el, who have not bowed the knee to Bā′al or kissed his image with their lips."

Here were tasks that would take all the rest of Ê-lī′jah's life; for, as we shall see, some of them were not completed until after Ê-lī′jah had passed away, though Ê-lī′jah prepared the way for them. But they gave to Ê-lī′jah what he needed most, work to do; a friend to stand beside him, so that he would no longer be alone; one also who would carry on his work after him; and the knowledge that he had not lived in vain, since there were still in the land seven thousand men faithful to the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el.

One of these commands Ê-lī′jah obeyed at once. He left Mount Hō′reb, journeyed northward through the wilderness, across the kingdom of Jū′dah, and into the land of Ĭş′ra-el. He found Ā′bel-mė-hō′lah, in the tribe-land of Mȧ-năs′seh on the west of Jôr′dan, and there he saw Ê-lī′shȧ, the son of Shā′phat. Ê-lī′shȧ was plowing in the field, with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him; for Ê-lī′shȧ was a rich man's son, and cared for a large farm.

Ê-lī′jah came to the field where Ê-lī′shȧ was at work, and without a word, took off his own mantle of skin, and threw it upon Ê-lī′shȧ's shoulders, and walked away. Ê-lī′shȧ knew well who this strange, rough, hair-covered man was; and he knew, too, what it meant when Ê-lī′jah cast his mantle upon him. It was a call for him to leave his home, to go out into the wilderness with Ê-lī′jah, to take up the life of a prophet, to face the danger of the queen's hate, and perhaps to be slain, as many prophets had been slain before. But Ê-lī′shȧ was a man of God, and he did not hesitate to obey God's call. He left his oxen standing in the field; he ran after Ê-lī′jah, and said to him, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will go with you."



Ê-LĪ′JAH PLACES HIS MANTLE ON Ê-LĪ′SHȦ.

Ê-lī′jah said to him, "Go back, if you wish; for what have I done to you?"

Then Ê-lī′shȧ went back to the field, killed the oxen, made a fire with the yokes and the wooden plow, roasted the flesh of the oxen on the fire, and gave them to be eaten by the people on the farm. This he did to show that he had left his farm forever. Then he kissed his father and mother, and left them, and went forth to live with Ê-lī′jah and to be Ê-lī′jah's helper.

Story Six

THE WOUNDED PROPHET AND HIS STORY

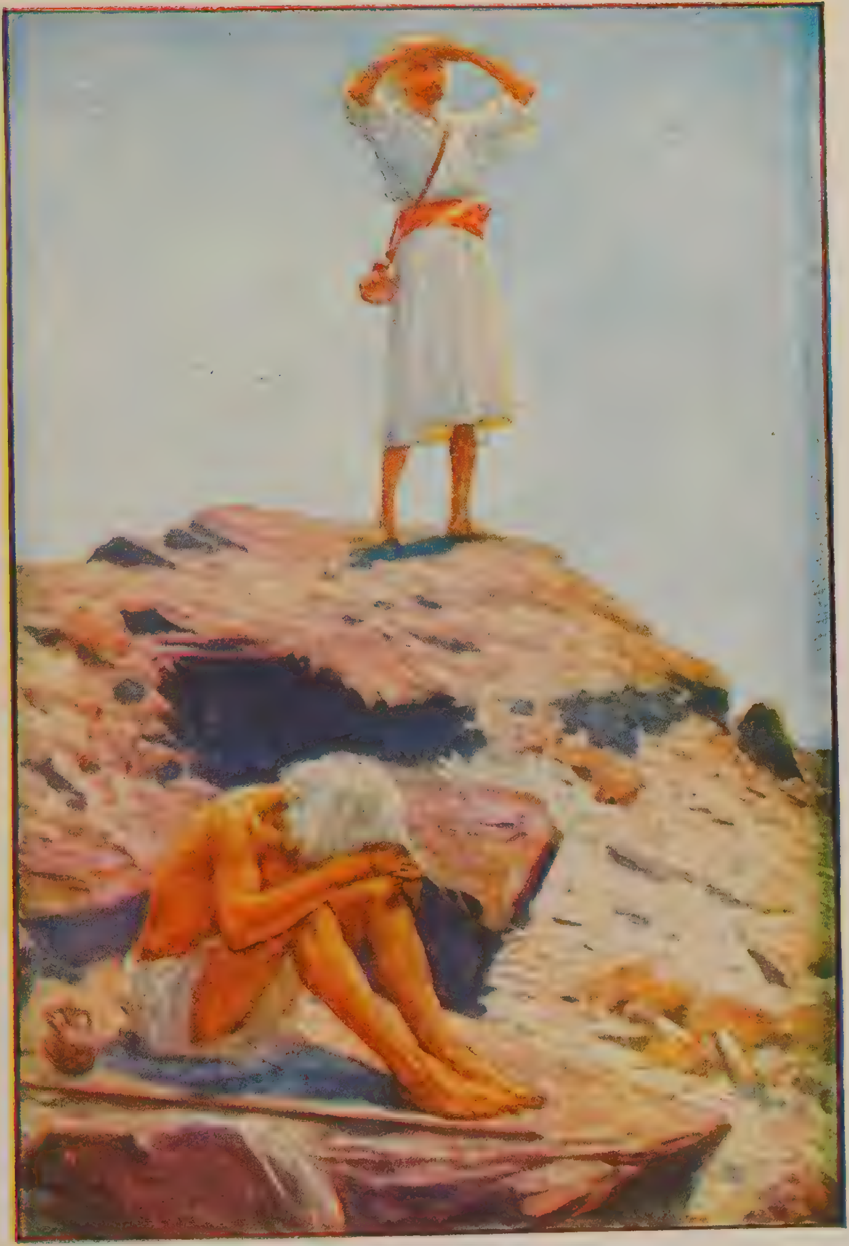
I Kings xx : 1 to 43.

THE country nearest to Ĭş′ra-el on the north was Sӯr′ĭ-ȧ, of which the chief city and capital was Dȧ-măs′cus; and its king was named Bĕn-hā′dăd. His kingdom was far greater and stronger than Ĭş′ra-el; and when he went to make war upon King Ā′hăb, such was the fear of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes for the Sӯr′ĭ-anş, that Ā′hăb could bring only seven thousand men against the Sӯr′ĭ-an army. The host of the Sӯr′ĭ-anş filled all the valleys and plains around Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ; but Bĕn-hā′dăd and his chief rulers were drinking wine when they should have been making ready for the battle; and the little army of Ĭş′ra-el won a great victory over the Sӯr′ĭ-anş, and drove them back to their own land.

Again the Sӯr′ĭ-anş came against Ĭş′ra-el, with an army as large as before; but again God gave to Ā′hăb and the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes a victory, and the Sӯr′ĭ-an army was destroyed. King Bĕn-hā′dăd fled away to his palace, and King Ā′hăb might easily have taken him prisoner and conquered all Sӯr′ĭ-ȧ. If he had done this, all danger from that land might have been forever removed. But Bĕn-hā′dăd dressed himself in sackcloth, and put a rope around his waist, and came as a beggar to Ā′hăb, and pleaded with him for his life and his kingdom. Ā′hăb felt very proud to have so great a king as Bĕn-hā′dăd come kneeling before him. He spared his life, and gave him back his kingdom. This was not wise; and God soon showed to Ā′hăb what a mistake he had made.

By this time, through the teaching of Ē-lī′jah and Ē-lī′shȧ, there were many prophets of the Lord in Ĭş′ra-el. The word of the Lord came to one of these prophets, and he said to a fellow-prophet, "Strike me, and give me a wound."

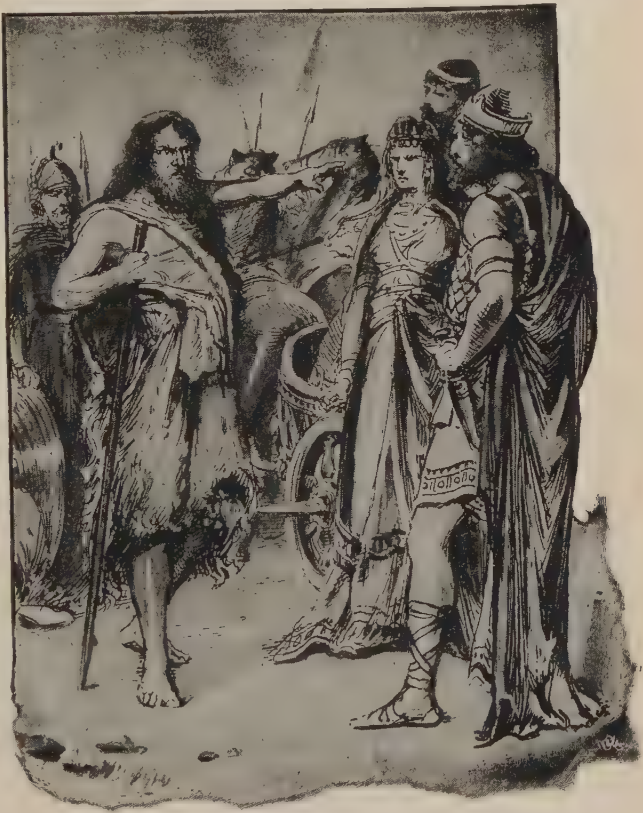
ST [illegible]
COLUMBIA, MO.



ELIJAH AND HIS SERVANT ON MOUNT CARMEL

But the man would not strike him, and the prophet said, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, as soon as you go away from me, a lion shall kill you."

And as the man was going away, a lion rushed out upon him, and killed him. Then the prophet said to another man, "Strike me, I pray you!"



THE PROPHET MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO THE KING.

The man struck him, and wounded him, so that the blood flowed. Then the prophet, all bloody, with his face covered, stood by the road as King Ā′hăb passed by, and he cried out to the king. The king saw him, and stopped, and asked him what had happened to him. Then the prophet said, "O king, I was in the battle; and a soldie brought to me a prisoner, and said to me, 'Keep this man; if you lose him, then your life shall go for his life, or you shall pay me a talent of silver for him.' And while I was busy here and there, the prisoner escaped. Now, O king, do not let my life be taken for the man's life."

But the king said, "You have given sentence against yourself, and it shall be as you have said. Your life shall go for your prisoner's life."

Then the prophet threw off the covering from his face, and the king saw that he was one of the prophets. And the prophet said to the king, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Because you have let go the king whom I willed to have destroyed, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.'"

When Ā′hăb heard this he was greatly troubled and displeased. He went to his palace in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ full of alarm, for he saw that he had not done wisely for his own kingdom in sparing his kingdom's greatest enemy.

Story Seven

WHAT AHAB PAID FOR HIS VINEYARD

I Kings xxi : 1 to 29.

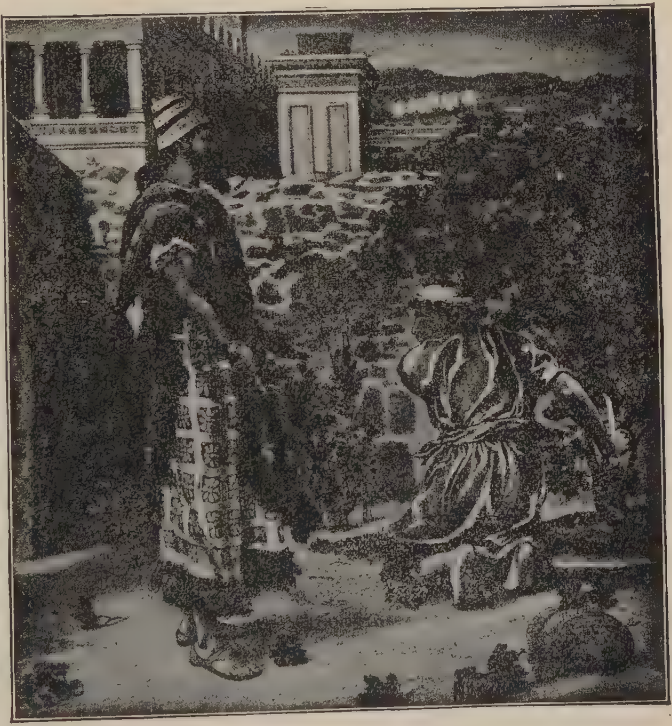
KING Ā′HĂB'S home was at Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, the capital of the kingdom. But he had also a palace at Jĕz′re-el, which overlooked the great plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon. And beside Ā′hăb's palace at Jĕz′re-el was a vineyard, belonging to a man named Nā′bŏth. Ā′hăb wished to own this vineyard, and he said to Nā′bŏth, "Let me have your vineyard, which is near my house. I would like to make of it a garden for vegetables. I will give you a better vineyard in place of it, or I will pay you the worth of it in money."

But Nā′bŏth answered the king, "This vineyard has belonged to my father's family for many generations, and I am not willing to give it up or to leave it."

Ā′hăb was very angry when he heard this. He came into his house, and refused to eat; but lay down on his bed, and turned his face to the wall. His wife Jĕz′e-bĕl came to him, and said, "Why are you so sad? What is troubling you?"

And Ā′hăb answered her, "I asked Nā′bŏth to sell me his vineyard, or to let me give him another vineyard for it, and he would not."

Then Jĕz′e-bĕl said to him, "Do you indeed rule over the kingdom of Ĭş′ra-el? Rise up, and eat your dinner, and enjoy yourself. I will give you the vineyard of Nā′bŏth." Then Queen Jĕz′e-bĕl sat down, and wrote a letter in Ā′hăb's name, and sealed it with the king's seal. And in the letter she wrote, "Let the word be given out that a meeting of the men of Jĕz′re-el is to be held, and set Nā′bŏth up before all the people. Have ready two men, no matter how worthless and wicked they may be, who will swear that they heard Nā′bŏth speak words of cursing against God and against the king. Then take Nā′bŏth out, and stone him with stones until he is dead."



Ā′HĂB AND NĀ′BŎTH.

Such was the fear of Queen Jĕz′e-bĕl among all the people, that they did as she gave command. They held a meeting, and set Nā′bŏth up in presence of the people; then they brought in two men, who told lies, declaring that they had heard Nā′bŏth speak words of cursing against God and against the king; and then they dragged Nā′bŏth out of the city, and stoned him, and killed him. Afterward they sent word to Queen Jĕz′e-bĕl that Nā′bŏth was dead, and Jĕz′e-bĕl said to Ā′hăb, "Now you can go and take as your own the vineyard of Nā′bŏth in Jĕz′re-el; for Nā′bŏth is no longer living; he is dead."

Then Ā′hăb rode in his chariot from Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ to Jĕz′re-el, and with him were two of his captains, one named Jē′hū, and another named Bĭd′kär. Just as they were riding in the vineyard that had been Nā′bŏth's, suddenly Ê-lī′jah, the prophet, with his mantle of skin, stood before them.

Ā′hăb was startled as he saw Ê-lī′jah, and he called out, "Have you found me, O my enemy?"

"I have found you," answered Ê-lī′jah, "because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the Lord. In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Nā′bŏth, shall dogs lick up your own blood. I will bring evil upon you, and will sweep you away; and I will cut off every man-child from Ā′hăb; and I will make your family like the family of Jĕr-o-bō′am, who made Ĭş′ra-el to sin. And because your wife, Jĕz′e-bĕl, has stirred you up to sin, she shall die, and the wild dogs of the city shall eat the body of Jĕz′e-bĕl by the wall of Jĕz′re-el."

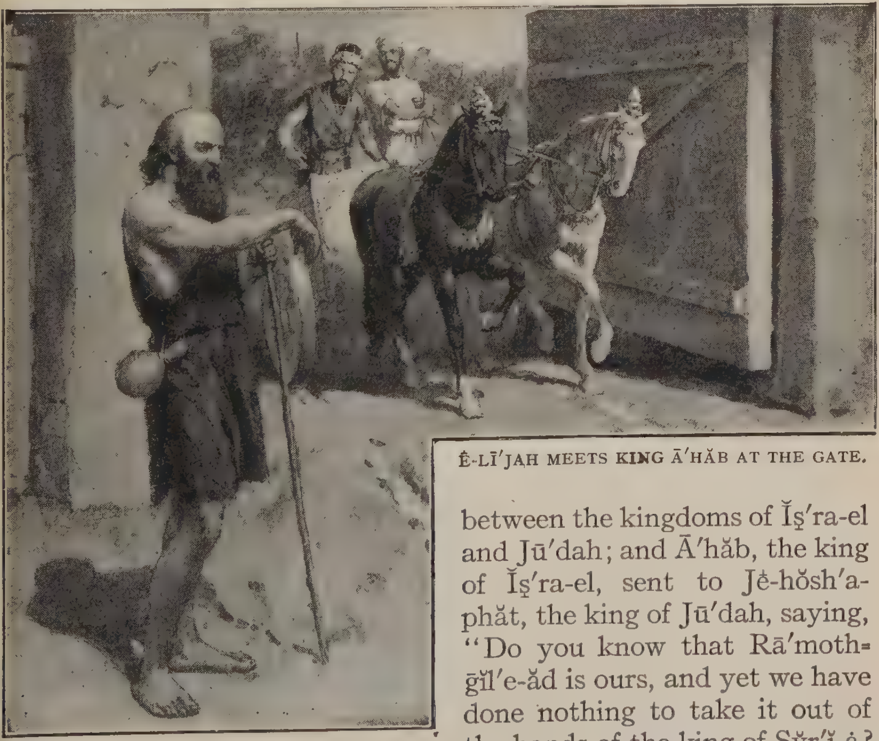
When Ā′hăb heard these words of Ê-lī′jah he saw how wickedly he had acted, and he felt sorrow for his sin. He put on sackcloth, and fasted, and sought for mercy. And the word of the Lord came to Ê-lī′jah, saying, "Do you see how Ā′hăb has humbled himself before me, and shows sorrow for his sin? Because of this, I will not bring the evil in his lifetime, but after he is dead, I will bring it upon his children."

Story Eight

THE ARROW THAT KILLED A KING

I Kings xxii : 1 to 40.

AFTER the two victories which King Ā′hăb gained over the Sȳr′ĭ-anş, there was peace between Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ and Ĭş′ra-el for three years. But in the third year the Sȳr′ĭ-anş became strong once more, and they seized a city of Ĭş′ra-el on the east of Jôr′dan, called Rā′moth=ḡĭl′e-ăd. At that time there was peace and friendship between the kingdoms of Ĭş′ra-el and Jū′dah; and Ā′hăb, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, sent to Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, the king of Jū′dah, saying, "Do you know that Rā′moth=ḡĭl′e-ăd is ours, and yet we have done nothing to take it out of the hands of the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ?



Ê-LĪ′JAH MEETS KING Ā′HĂB AT THE GATE.

Will you go up with me to battle at Rā′moth-ḡĭl′e-ăd?" And King Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt sent word to the king of Ĭş′ra-el, "I am with you, and my people are with your people, and my horses with your horses."

So the king of Ĭş′ra-el and the king of Jū′dah gathered their armies for war against the Sўr′ĭ-anş, and King Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt came to Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ to meet King Ā′hăb. Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt was a good man, and a worshipper of the Lord. He said to Ā′hăb, "Let us ask the prophets to give us the word of the Lord before we go to battle."

Then the king of Ĭş′ra-el called together his prophets, four hundred men, not prophets of the Lord, but false prophets of the idols, and he asked them, "Shall I go up to battle at Rā′moth-ḡĭl′e-ăd, or shall I remain at home?" And the prophets of the idols said, with one voice, "Go up; for the Lord will give Rā′moth-ḡĭl′e-ăd to you."

But Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt was not satisfied with the words of these men. He asked, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, of whom we can ask the Lord's will?"

"There is one prophet," answered Ā′hăb; "his name is Mī-cā′iah, the son of Ĭm′lah; but I hate him; for he never prophesies any good about me, but always evil."

"Let not the king say that," said Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt. "Let us hear what Mī-cā′iah will speak."

Then King Ā′hăb sent one of his officers to bring the prophet Mī-cā′iah. And the officer said to Mī-cā′iah, "All the prophets have spoken good to the king; now, I pray you, let your words be like theirs, and do you speak good also."

Ane Mī-cā′iah said, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that I will speak, and nothing else."

The king of Ĭş′ra-el and the king of Jū′dah were seated together in their royal robes, at an open place in front of the gate of Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ. And King Ā′hăb said to Mī-cā′iah, "Mī-cā′iah, speak to me nothing but the truth, in the name of the Lord."

Then Mī-cā′iah said, "I saw all Ĭş′ra-el scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd; and the Lord said, 'These have no master; let every man go back to his own house.'"

Then the king of Ĭş′ra-el said to Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, "Did I not tell you that Mī-cā′iah would prophesy about me no good, but only evil?"

For Ā′hăb knew that the words of Mī-cā′iah meant that he would be slain in the battle.

And Mī-cā′iah went on and said, "Hear thou the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing around him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, 'Who will go and deceive Ā′hăb, so that he will go up and fall at Rā′moth-ğĭl′e-ăd?' And one spirit came forth and said, 'I will go, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ā′hăb's prophets.' And the Lord said to the spirit, 'Go and deceive him.' Now, therefore, the Lord has let all these false prophets deceive you; and the Lord has spoken evil against you."

Then the king of Ĭş′ra-el said to his guards, "Take Mī-cā′iah, and lead him to the governor of the city, and say, 'Put this fellow in prison, and let him have nothing to eat but dry bread and water until I come again in peace.'"

And Mī-cā′iah said, "If you return at all in peace, then the Lord has not spoken by me. Hear my words, all ye people."

So the kings of Ĭş′ra-el and Jū′dah led their armies across the river Jôr′dan and up the mountains on the east, to battle at Rā′moth-ğĭl′e-ăd. Ā′hăb felt afraid after the prophecy of Mī-cā′iah, and he said to Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, "I will dress as a common soldier before going into the battle; but do you wear your royal robes."

Now the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ had given word to all his captains to look out especially for the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and to fight him, and kill him, even if they should kill no other man. When they saw Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt in his kingly garments standing in his chariot, they thought that he was King Ā′hăb, and they turned all the battle toward him. But Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt cried out, and then they found that he was not the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and they left him. In the battle one soldier of the Sȳr′ĭ-anş drew his bow, and shot an arrow, not knowing that he was aiming at the king of Ĭş′ra-el. The arrow struck King Ā′hăb just between his breastplate and his lower armor. He was badly wounded, but they held him up in his chariot, so that the men might not see him fall; and his blood was running out of the wound upon the floor of the chariot, until the sun set, when Ā′hăb died. And the cry went through all the host of Ĭş′ra-el, "Every man to his city, and every man to his country."

And then all knew that the king of Ĭş′ra-el was dead. They brought his body to Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and buried him there. And at the pool of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ they washed the king's chariot and his armor. And there the wild dogs of the city licked up Ā′hăb's blood, according to the word of the Lord spoken by Ê-lī′jah.

Thus died King Ā′hăb, the son of Ŏm′rĭ. He was not a bad man at heart, but he was weak in the hands of his wife, Jĕz′e-bĕl, who led him and his kingdom into wickedness in the sight of the Lord.

Story Nine

ELIJAH'S CHARIOT OF FIRE

II Kings i : 1, to ii : 15.

AFTER the death of Ā′hăb, his son Ā-ha-zī′ah reigned for only two years as king of Ĭş′ra-el. He fell out of a window in his palace, and was injured so that he died; and as he had no son, his brother, Jė-hō′ram, became king in his place.

The work of Ê-lī′jah, the prophet, was now ended, and the Lord was about to take him up to heaven. Ê-lī′jah and Ê-lī′shȧ went together to a place called Gĭl′găl, not the place beside the river Jôr′dan where the army of Ĭş′ra-el was encamped under Jŏsh′u-ȧ, but another place of the same name among the mountains, not far from Bĕth′-el. And Ê-lī′jah said to Ê-lī′shȧ, "Stay here, I pray you, for the Lord has sent me to Bĕth′-el."

Ê-lī′shȧ knew that Ê-lī′jah would be taken from him very soon, and he said, "As surely as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you."

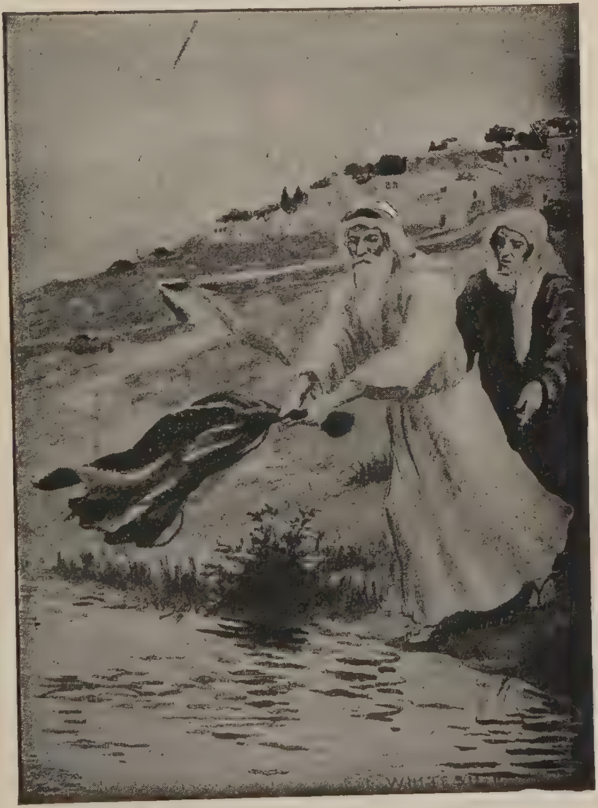
So Ê-lī′jah and Ê-lī′shȧ walked together to Bĕth′-el. At Bĕth′-el were living many worshippers of the Lord, who were called "sons of the prophets," because they followed the teaching of the prophets, and some of them became prophets themselves. These men came to Ê-lī′shȧ, and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from you very soon?"

And Ê-lī′shȧ answered them "Yes, I know it; but hold your peace; do not speak of it."

And at Bĕth′=el Ê-lī′jah said to Ê-lī′shȧ again, "Ê-lī′shȧ, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jĕr′ĭ-chō." But Ê-lī′shȧ answered him, "As surely as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you."

So Ê-lī′jah and Ê-lī′shȧ walked together down the steep road from Bĕth′=el to Jĕr′ĭ-chō. And at Jĕr′ĭ-chō the followers of the prophets came to Ê-lī′shȧ and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord will take your master away from you to-day?"

And he answered them, "Yes, I know it; but hold your peace, and say nothing." And Ê-lī′jah said to him again, "Stay here at Jĕr′ĭ-chō, I pray you, for the Lord has sent me to the river Jôr′dan."



Ê-LĪ′JAH STRIKES THE WATER WITH HIS MANTLE.

But Ê-lī′shȧ said to Ê-lī′jah once more, "As surely as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you."

So Ê-lī′jah and Ê-lī′shȧ walked from Jĕr′ĭ-chō to the river

Jôr′dan, about five miles. About fifty men of the sons of the prophets who lived at Jĕr′ĭ-chō followed them at a distance. When they came to the bank of Jôr′dan, Ḗ-lī′jah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and struck the waters. Then the waters were divided on each side, and a path was made across the river; and the two prophets walked across on dry ground. And as they walked, Ḗ-lī′jah said, "Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken away from you."

Ḗ-lī′shȧ answered him, "All that I ask is that your spirit shall come upon me in greater power than comes upon any other man."

And Ḗ-lī′jah said to him, "You have asked a great blessing; and if you see me when I am taken away, it shall come to you; but if you do not see me, it shall not come."

And as they still went on, and talked, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire came between them, and parted them; and Ḗ-lī′jah went up in a whirlwind on the fiery chariot to heaven.

And Ḗ-lī′shȧ saw him going up toward heaven, and he cried out, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Ĭş′ra-el, and the horsemen thereof!"

He meant that in losing Ḗ-lī′jah the kingdom had lost more than an army of chariots and horsemen. After this he saw Ḗ-lī′jah no more; but he caught up the mantle of Ḗ-lī′jah which had fallen from him. With the mantle he struck the waters of Jôr′dan, saying, "Where now is the Lord God of Ḗ-lī′jah?"

And as he struck the water with Ḗ-lī′jah's mantle it parted on either side, and Ḗ-lī′shȧ walked across the Jôr′dan. The sons of the prophets who were standing near the river had not seen Ḗ-lī′jah go up; but now they saw Ḗ-lī′shȧ walking through the river alone, and they felt that God had taken Ḗ-lī′jah away. They said, "The spirit of Ḗ-lī′jah now rests upon Ḗ-lī′shȧ," and they came to meet him, and bowed down before him as their chief. So Ḗ-lī′jah was taken away, but Ḗ-lī′shȧ stood in his place as the Lord's prophet.

Story Ten

A SPRING SWEETENED BY SALT; AND WATER THAT LOOKED LIKE BLOOD

II Kings ii : 19, to iii : 27.

AFTER Ê-lī′jah had been taken up to heaven, Ê-lī′shȧ stayed for a time at Jĕr′ĭ-chō; for, unlike Ê-lī′jah, Ê-lī′shȧ did not live in the wilderness, away from the people. He lived in the cities, and helped many by the power which the Lord gave to him.

The people of Jĕr′ĭ-chō said to Ê-lī′shȧ, "This city stands in a pleasant place; but the water of its spring is very bitter, and causes disease and death; and the land around it is barren, giving no fruit."

Ê-lī′shȧ said to them, "Bring me a small new bottle, and fill it with salt."

They brought it to him, and he poured the salt into the fountain that gave water to the city, and said:

"Thus saith the Lord, 'I have healed these waters; from them there shall no more be death or unfruitfulness to the land.'"

And the waters became pure and sweet from that time onward. Many believe that the fountain which still flows at the foot of the mountain near the ruins where once stood Jĕr′ĭ-chō is the one which was healed by the prophet; and it is called "The Fountain of Ê-lī′shȧ."

At this time Jė-hō′ram, the son of Ā′hăb, was king of Ĭş′ra-el. He reigned twelve years, not so wickedly as his father Ā′hăb had ruled, but still doing evil in the sight of the Lord. From the days of King Dā′vid the land of Mō′ab, on the east of the Dead Sea, had been under the control of Ĭş′ra-el. The land was governed by its own king, but he paid every year a large sum to Ĭş′ra-el. The king of Mō′ab in the times of Ā′hăb and Jė-hō′ram was named Mē′shȧ. He had great flocks of sheep, and he paid to the king of Ĭş′ra-el every year the wool of a hundred thousand sheep and of as many rams.

When King Ā′hăb was dead, the king of Mō′ab rose against Ĭş′ra-el, and tried to set his land free. Then King Jĕ-hō′ram sent for King Jĕ-hŏsh′a-phăt of Jū′dah, and these two kings gathered their armies, and made war on Mē′shȧ, the king of Mō′ab. They led their armies southward through Jū′dah, and then through Ē′dom, on the south of the Dead Sea, and from Ē′dom into the land of Mō′ab; and with them was the king of Ē′dom, who was under the king of Jū′dah.

While they were on their march they found no water, either for the army or for the horses. And the king of Ĭş′ra-el said, "Alas! The Lord has brought together these three kings, only to let them fall into the hands of the king of Mō′ab!"

But the good King Jĕ-hŏsh′a-phăt said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, so that we may ask of him to show us the Lord's will?"

And one man said, "Ê-lī′shȧ, the son of Shā′phat, is here; the man who poured water on the hands of Ê-lī′jah, and was his servant."

And Jĕ-hŏsh′a-phăt said, "The word of the Lord is with him; let us see him."

And the three kings went to find Ê-lī′shȧ; but Ê-lī′shȧ said to the king of Ĭş′ra-el, "Why do you come to me? Go to the idol-prophets of your father Ā′hăb and your mother Jĕz′e-bĕl, and ask them!"

And the king of Ĭş′ra-el said to Ê-lī′shȧ, "You must help us; for the Lord has brought these three kings together, to let them fall into the hands of the king of Mō′ab."

Then said Ê-lī′shȧ, "As surely as the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, if Jĕ-hŏsh′a-phăt, the king of Jū′dah, were not here, I would not look on you nor speak to you. But now bring me one who can play on the harp, a minstrel."

And while the minstrel made music on his harp, the power of the Lord came upon Ê-lī′shȧ, and he said, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Make this valley full of ditches. For the Lord tells me that you shall not see any rain, nor hear any wind, yet the valley shall be filled with water; and you shall drink, and your cattle and your horses also shall drink. And the Lord shall give the Mō′ab-ītes into your hand; and you shall take their cities, and cut down their trees, and stop their wells, and shall conquer their land."

And it came to pass as Ê-lī′shȧ had said. They dug ditches in the valley, and the next morning they found them full of water, enough for all the host. And when the men of Mō′ab saw the water in the light of the sun, it was red like blood. They said, one to another, "That is blood; the three kings have quarreled, and their armies have killed each other; now, men of Mō′ab, hasten to take the camp of the three kings, and all the treasure that is in it!"

So the men of Mō′ab came rushing unguarded and without their arms. But the army of Ĭş′ra-el and of Jū′dah and of Ē′dom, met them, and slew them, and won over them a great victory. From that place they went on laying waste the land of Mō′ab, until the cities were taken, and the whole land was made desolate. And Mē′shȧ, the king of Mō′ab, was in such distress, that, hoping to please the god of his land, who was called Chē′mŏsh, he took his oldest son, who was to have reigned in his place, and killed him, and offered him up as a burnt-offering. But all was in vain, for the Mō′ab-ītes were still held under the power of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. The story of this war between Ĭş′ra-el and Mō′ab is written not only in the second Book of Kings in the Bible, but also on a stone pillar, which was set up by the king of Mō′ab afterward. This pillar was found in the land of Mō′ab not many years ago, and the writing upon it was read, showing that the history of this war as given in the Bible is true.

Ē-LĪ′SHȦ'S FOUNTAIN.

Story Eleven

THE POT OF OIL AND THE POT OF POISON

II Kings iv : 1 to 7; iv : 38 to 44; vi : 1 to 7.

IN many places in the land of Ĭş′ra-el there were living families of people who listened to the teaching of the prophets, and worshipped the Lord. They were among the seven thousand in Ĭş′ra-el who never bowed their knees to the images of Bā′al. Ê-lī′shȧ went through the land meeting these people, and teaching them, and leading them in their worship. They were called the "sons of the prophets," and among them were some to whom God spoke, men who themselves became prophets of the Lord.

The wife of one of these men, the sons of the prophets, came one day to Ê-lī′shȧ, and said, "O man of God, my husband is dead; and you know that he served the Lord while he lived. He was owing some money when he died; and now the man to whom he owed it has come, and he says that he will take my two sons to be his slaves, unless I pay the debt."

For in those lands, when a man owed a debt, he could be sold, or his children, that the debt might be paid. Ê-lī′shȧ said to the woman, "What shall I do to help you? What have you in the house?"

"I have nothing in the house," answered the woman, "except a pot of oil."

Then Ê-lī′shȧ said to her, "Go to your neighbors and borrow of them empty jars, and vessels, and bowls; borrow a great many. Then go into the room, and shut the door upon yourself and your sons; and pour out the oil into the vessels, and as each vessel is filled set it aside."

The woman went out, and borrowed of all her neighbors vessels that would hold oil, until she had a great many. Then she went into the house, and shut the door, and told her sons to bring the vessels to her one by one; and she poured out oil, filling vessel after vessel until all were full. At last they said to her, "There is not another vessel that can hold oil."

And then the oil stopped running. If she had borrowed more vessels there would have been more oil. She came and told Ē-lī′shȧ, the man of God; and he said, "Go and sell the oil; pay the debt, and keep the rest of the money for yourself and your sons to live upon."

At another time Ē-lī′shȧ came to Gĭl′găl among the mountains, near Bĕth′-el, and with him were some of these men, the sons of the prophets. It was a time when food was scarce, and they sought in the field for vegetables and green things to be eaten. One man by mistake brought a number of wild gourds, which were poisonous, and threw them into the pot to be cooked with the rest of the food.

While they were eating they felt suddenly that they had been poisoned, and they cried out, "O man of God, there is death in the pot! The food is poisoned!"

Then Ē-lī′shȧ took some meal, and threw it into the pot with the poisoned food. And he said, "Now take the food out of the pot, and let the people eat of it."

They did so; and there was no longer any poison in the food.

At one time a man came bringing to the prophet a present of loaves of barley-bread, and some ears of new corn in the husks. There were with Ē-lī′shȧ that day a hundred men of the sons of the prophets, and Ē-lī′shȧ said to his servant, "Give this to the people for their dinner."

The servant said, "What, should I give this for a meal to a hundred men?"

And Ē-lī′shȧ said, "Yes, set it before them, and let them eat. For thus saith the Lord, 'They shall eat, and shall have enough, and shall leave some of it.'"

So he gave them the food; and every man took as much as he wished, and some was left over, according to the word of the Lord.

Once a company of these sons of the prophets went down from the mountains to a place near the river Jôr′dan, and began to build a house; and Ē-lī′shȧ was with them. As one of the men was cutting down a tree the head fell off from his axe, and dropped into the water. In those times iron and steel were very scarce and costly. The man said, "O my master, what shall I do? for this was a borrowed axe!"

Then Ê-lī′shȧ asked to be shown just where the axe-head had fallen into the water. He cut off a stick of wood, and threw it into the water at the place. At once the iron axe-head rose to the surface of the water, and floated, as it if were wood. The prophet said, "Reach out and take it," and the man took the iron, fitted it to the handle, and went on with his work.

By these works of power all the people came to know that Ê-lī′shȧ was a true prophet of the Lord, and spoke as with the voice of the Lord to Ĭş′ra-el.

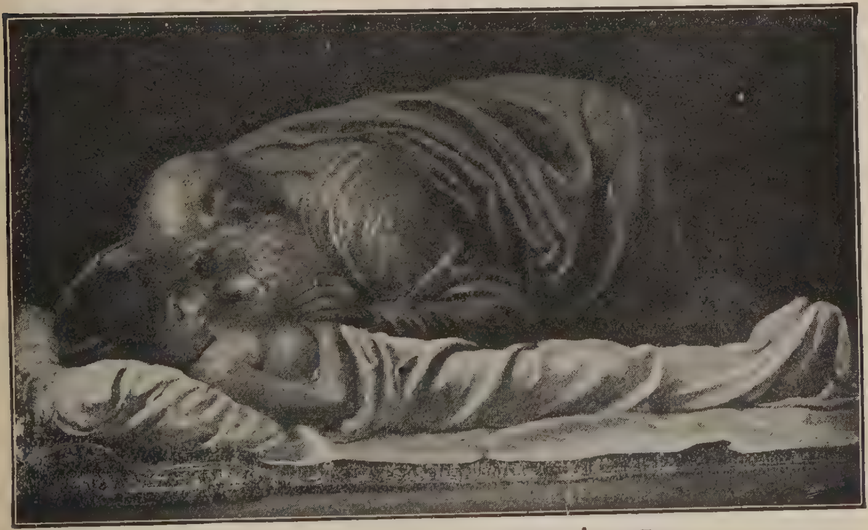
Story Twelve

THE LITTLE BOY AT SHUNEM

II Kings iv : 8 to 37.

THE prophet Ê-lī′shȧ went through the land of Ĭş′ra-el, meeting in many places the people who worshipped the Lord, and teaching them. On one of his journeys he visited the little city of Shụ′nem, which was on a hill looking over the great plain of Ĕs′dra-ē′lon from the east. A rich woman who was living in that place asked him to come to her house, and to take his meals there whenever he journeyed by. So, as often as Ê-lī′shȧ came to Shụ′nem on his journeys, he stopped for a meal or a night at this woman's home. After a time the lady said to her husband, "I see that this is a holy man of God who comes to our house so often. Let us build a little room for him on the side of the house; and let us place in the room for him a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick; so that when he comes it will be a home for him, and he can sleep there."

So they built the room, and as often as Ê-lī'shȧ passed by he stayed there with his servant, the man who waited on him, as Ê-lī'shȧ himself in other days had waited upon Ê-lī'jah. The servant's name was Ḡė-hā'zī. At one time Ê-lī'shȧ said to the woman, "You have been very kind to me and to my helper, and have done much for us. Now, what can I do for you? Shall I ask the king to show you some favor? Or would you like anything that the chief of the army can do for you?" The woman said, "I live among my own people, and there is nothing else that I wish." Then Ḡė-hā'zī said to Ê-lī'shȧ, "This woman has no son." And Ê-lī'shȧ said to her, "A year from this time, God will give to you a little boy."



Ê-LĪ'SHȦ LAYS HIS FACE ON THE CHILD'S FACE.

The promise made the woman very happy; but she could scarcely believe it to be true, until the little child came. He grew up, and became old enough to go with his father out into the field among the men who were reaping grain. Suddenly, in the field, the child cried out to his father, "O my head, my head!"

His father saw that he was very ill, and he told one of his men to take him to his mother. He lay in his mother's arms until noon, and then he died. The mother did not tell her husband that the boy was dead; but she rode as quickly as she could go to the prophet, who was on the other side of the plain, near Mount Cär′mel.

While she was yet far off, Ê-lī′shȧ saw her coming, and he said to Ḡė-hā′zī, his servant, "Run to meet this lady of Shụ′nem, and ask her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'"

She answered, "It is well"; but she did not stop until she met the prophet, and then she fell down before him and took hold of his feet. Ḡė-hā′zī, the prophet's servant, did not think it was proper for her to seize him in this manner, and was about to take her away. But Ê-lī′shȧ said to him, "Let her alone, for she is in deep trouble; and the Lord has hid it from me, and has not told me."

And the woman said, "Did I ask for a son? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'" Then Ê-lī′shȧ knew what had taken place. He said to Ḡė-hā′zī, "Take my staff, and go at once to this woman's house. If you meet any man, do not stop to speak to him; and if any one speaks to you, do not stop to answer him. But go, and lay my staff on the face of the child."

But the mother was not content to have the servant only go to her house. She wanted Ê-lī′shȧ himself to go; and she said, "As surely as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you."

Then Ê-lī′shȧ followed her back to Shụ′nem, across the plain. On the way they met Ḡė-hā′zī coming back. He had laid the staff, as he had been told to lay it, on the face of the child; and he said, "The child is not awaked."

When Ê-lī′shȧ came he found the child dead, and laid upon the bed in the prophet's room, the staff upon his face. He shut the door, and prayed beside the bed to the Lord. And after his prayer, he lay with his face upon the child's face, and his hands on the child's hands; and as he lay the child's body began to grow warm. Then he rose up, and walked up and down in the house; and again he lay upon the child, and put his arms around him. Suddenly the child began to sneeze, and then he opened his eyes, alive once more.

Ê-lī′shȧ told his servant to call the mother, and when she came he said to her, "Take up your son."

The mother saw that her son was alive from the dead; she fell at Ê-lī′shȧ's feet to show how great was her thankfulness to him, and then she took her son up in her arms, and went out.

Story Thirteen

HOW A LITTLE GIRL HELPED TO CURE A LEPER

II Kings v : 1 to 27.

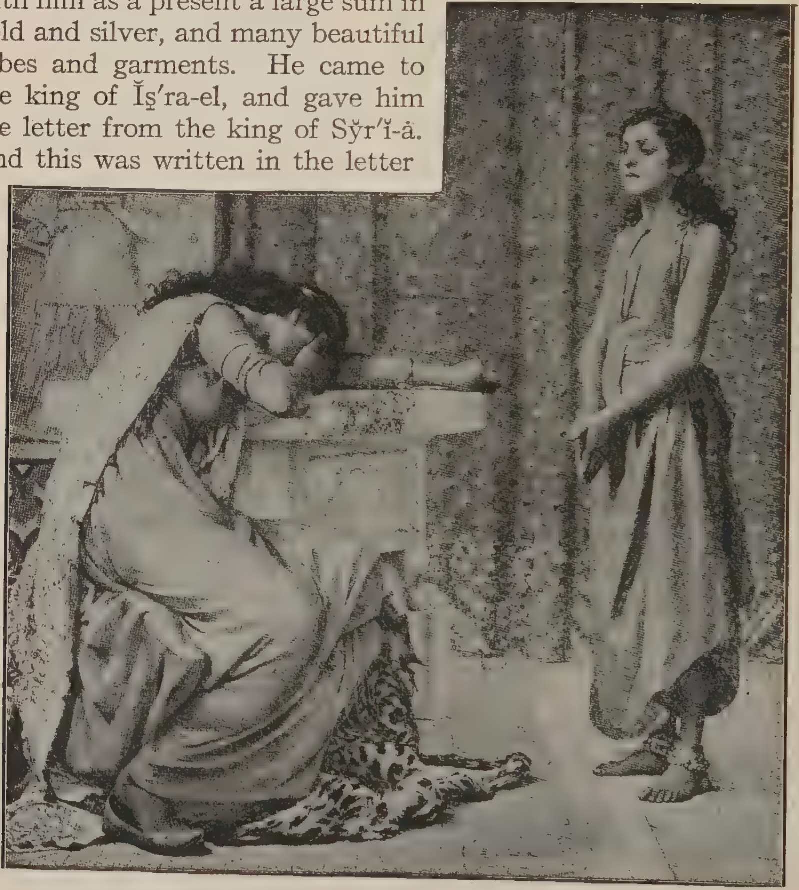
AT one time, while Ê-lī′shȧ was living in Ĭş′ra-el, the general of the Sy̆r′ĭ-an army was named Nā′a-man. He was a great man in his rank and power; and a brave man in battle; for he had won victories for Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. But one sad terrible trouble came to Nā′a-man. He was a leper. A leper was one with a disease called leprosy, which is still found in those lands. The leper's skin turns a deathly white and is covered with scales. One by one his fingers and toes, his hands, his feet, his arms and limbs, decay, until at last the man dies; and for the disease there is no cure. Yet, strange to say, through it all, the leper feels no pain; and often will not for a long time believe that he has leprosy.

There was in Nā′a-man's house at Dȧ-măs-cus, in Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, a little girl, who waited on Nā′a-man's wife. She was a slave-girl stolen from her mother's home in Ĭş′ra-ẹl, and carried away as a captive to Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. Even when there was no open war between Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ and Ĭş′ra-el, parties of men were going out on both sides, and destroying villages on the border, robbing the people, and carrying them away, to be killed or sold as slaves. But this little girl, even though she had suffered wrong, had a kind heart, full of sorrow for her master Nā′a-man; and one day she said to her mistress:

"I wish that my lord Nā′a-man might meet the prophet who lives in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ; for he could cure his leprosy."

Some one told Nā′a-man what the little girl had said; and Nā′a-man spoke of it to the king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. Now the king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ loved Nā′a-man greatly; and when he went to worship in the temple of his god, out of all his nobles he chose Nā′a-man as the one upon whose arm he leaned. He greatly desired to have Nā′a-man's leprosy cured; and he said, "I will send a letter to the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and I will ask him to let his prophet cure you."

So Nā′a-man, with a great train of followers, rode in his chariot from Dȧ-măs′cus to Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, about a hundred miles. He took with him as a present a large sum in gold and silver, and many beautiful robes and garments. He came to the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and gave him the letter from the king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. And this was written in the letter



THE SLAVE GIRL AND NĀ′A-MAN'S WIFE.

"With this letter I have sent to you Nā′a-man, my servant; and I wish you to cure him of his leprosy."

The king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ supposed that as this prophet who could cure leprosy was in Sȧ′mā′rĭ-ȧ, he was under the orders of the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and must do whatever his king told him to do; and as he did not know the prophet, but knew the king, he wrote to him. But the king was greatly alarmed when he read the letter.

"Am I God," he said, "to kill men and to make men live! Why should the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ send to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Do you not see that he is trying to find an excuse for making war, in asking me to do what no man can do?"

And the king of Ĭş′ra-el tore his garments, as men did when they were in deep trouble. Ê-lī′shȧ the prophet heard of the letter, and of the king's alarm, and he sent a message to the king.

"Why are you so frightened? Let this man come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet of the Lord in Ĭş′ra-el."

So Nā′a-man came with his chariots, his horses, and his followers, and stood before the door of Ê-lī′shȧ's house. Ê-lī′shȧ did not come out to meet him, but sent his servant out to him, saying:

"Go and wash in the river Jôr′dan seven times, and your flesh and your skin shall become pure, and you shall be free from the leprosy."

But Nā′a-man was very angry because Ê-lī′shȧ had not treated with more respect so great a man as he was. He forgot, or he did not know, that by the laws of Ĭş′ra-el no man might touch or even come near a leper; and he said:

"Why, I supposed that of course he would come out and meet me, and would wave his hand over the leper spot, and would call on the name of the Lord his God, and in that manner would cure my leprosy! Are not Ăb′a-nȧ and Phär′par, the two rivers of Dȧ-măs-cus, better than all the waters in Ĭş′ra-el? May I not wash in them and be clean?"

And Nā′a-man turned and went away in a rage of anger. But his servants were wiser than he. They came to him, and one of them said:

"My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? Then why not do it, when he says, 'Wash and be clean'?"

After a little Nā′a-man's anger cooled, and he rode down the mountains to the river Jôr′dan. He washed in its water seven times, as the prophet had bidden him. And the scales of leprosy left his skin; and his flesh became like the flesh of a little child, pure and clean. Then Nā′a-man, a leper no more, came back to Ê-lī′shȧ's house with all his company; and he said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Ĭş′ra-el. Let me make you a present in return for what you have done for me."

But the true prophets of God never gave their message or did their works for pay; and Ê-lī′shȧ said to Nā′a-man:

"As surely as the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing."

And Nā′a-man urged him to take the present, but he refused. Then Nā′a-man asked as a favor that he might be allowed to take away from the land of Ĭş′ra-el as much soil as could be carried on two mules, with which to build an altar; for he thought that an altar to the God of Ĭş′ra-el could be made only of earth from the land of Ĭş′ra-el; and he said:

"From this time I will offer no burnt-offering or sacrifice to any other God except the God of Ĭş′ra-el. When I go with my master, the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, to worship in the temple of Rĭm′mon his god; and my master leans on my arm, and I bow down to Rĭm′mon with him, then may the Lord forgive me for this, which will look as if I were worshipping another God."

And Ê-lī′shȧ said to him, "Go in peace."

Then Nā′a-man went on his way back to his own land. But Ḡē-hā′zī, the servant of Ê-lī′shȧ, said to himself:

"My master has let this Sȳr′ĭ-an go, without taking anything from him; but I will run after him, and ask him for a present."

So Ḡē-hā′zī ran after Nā′a-man; and Nā′a-man saw him following, and stopped his chariot, and stepped down to meet him. And Ḡē-hā′zī said to him:

"My master has sent me to you to say that just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to his house; will you give them a talent of silver and two suits of clothing?"

And Nā′a-man said, "Let me give you two talents of silver."

So he put two talents of silver in two bags, a talent in each bag, and gave them to Ḡē-hā′zī, and with them two suits of fine clothing; and he sent them back by two of his servants. But before they came to Ê-lī′shȧ's house, Ḡē-hā′zī took the gifts and hid them. Then Ḡē-hā′zī went into the house, and stood before Ê-lī′shȧ. And Ê-lī′shȧ said to him, "Ḡē-hā′zī, where have you been?"

And Ḡē-hā′zī answered, "I have not been at any place."

And Ê-lī′shȧ said to him:

"Did not my heart go with you, and did I not see you, when the man stepped down from his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to receive gifts of money, and garments, or gifts of vineyards and oliveyards, and of sheep and oxen? Because you have done this wickedness, the leprosy of Nā′a-man shall come upon you, and shall cling to you, and to your children after you forever!"

And Ḡė-hā′zī walked out from Ê-lī′shȧ's presence, a leper, with his skin as white as snow.

Story Fourteen

THE CHARIOTS OF FIRE AROUND ELISHA

II Kings vi : 8 to 23.

THERE was constant war between Ĭş′ra-el and Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ through all the years of Ê-lī′shȧ, the prophet. And the king of Ĭş′ra-el found Ê-lī′shȧ a greater help than his horses and chariots. For whenever the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ told his officers to make an attack upon any place in the land of Ĭş′ra-el, Ê-lī′shȧ would send word to the king of Ĭş′ra-el, saying, "Watch carefully that place, and send men to guard it, for the Sȳr′ĭ-anş are coming to attack it."

And then, when the Sȳr′ĭ-an army came to the place, they were sure to find it strongly guarded so that their soldiers could do nothing. This happened so many times that the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ at last said to his nobles, "Some one among you is secretly helping the king of Ĭş′ra-el, and is sending him word of all our plans. Will no one tell me who the traitor is?"

And they said, "No one of us, my lord, O king, has made known your plans; but Ê-lī′shȧ, the prophet that is in Ĭş′ra-el, tells the king of Ĭş′ra-el the words that you speak in your own room."

Then the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ said, "Go and find where that man is, so that I may send an army to take him."

After a time the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ heard that Ḗ-lī′shȧ was staying in Dō′than. Then he sent to that place a great army, with horses and chariots. They came by night, and stood in a great ring all around the city, ready to seize the prophet. In the morning the prophet's helper rose up early; and he found the city surrounded on every side by a host of men, with swords and spears. He called Ḗ-lī′shȧ, in great alarm, and said to him, "O my master, what shall we do?"

"Fear not," answered Ḗ-lī′shȧ, "there are more men on our side than on theirs."

And then Ḗ-lī′shȧ prayed to the Lord, saying, "O Lord, open the eyes of this young man, and let him see who are with us."

Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw what other men could not see, that the mountain on which the city stood was covered with horses and chariots of fire, sent by the Lord to keep his prophet safe. But this the Sȳr′ĭ-anș could not see; and they came up to the gates of the city to take Ḗ-lī′shȧ. Then Ḗ-lī′shȧ prayed to the Lord, saying, "Lord, make these men blind for a little while." Then a mist came over the eyes of the Sȳr′ĭ-anș, and they could not see clearly. And Ḗ-lī′shȧ went out to them, and said, "This is not the right city, but I will show you the way. Follow me."

And Ḗ-lī′shȧ led them from Dō′than to Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and into the walls of the city, where the army of Ĭș′ra-el were standing all around them. Then Ḗ-lī′shȧ prayed, "O Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see."

And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw the walls of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and the host of Ĭș′ra-el all around them. The king of Ĭș′ra-el was glad to have his enemies in his power; and he said to Ḗ-lī′shȧ, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

But Ḗ-lī′shȧ said to him, "You shall not kill them. Would you kill helpless men whom you had taken as prisoners? Give them bread to eat, and water to drink, and send them home to their master."

So, instead, of killing the Sȳr′ĭ-an soldiers, or holding them as prisoners, the king of Ĭș′ra-el set plenty of food before them, and gave them all that they needed. Then he sent them home to their master, the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ. And after that it was a long time before the Sȳr′ĭ-an armies came into the land of Ĭș′ra-el.

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

Story Fifteen

WHAT THE LEPERS FOUND IN THE CAMP

II Kings vi : 24, to vii : 20.

AFTER a time there was another great war between Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ and Ĭş′ra-el; and Bĕn=hā′dăd, the king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, led a mighty army into the land of Ĭş′ra-el, and laid siege against the city of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ. So hard and so long was the siege that the people in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ could find nothing to eat; many died from want of food, and some killed their own children, and ate them.

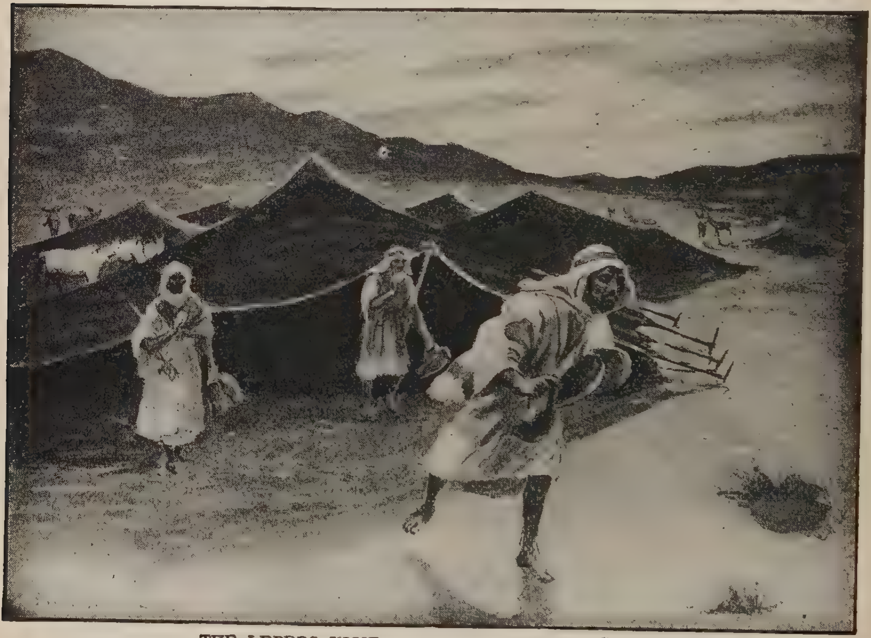
But through all the siege Ê-lī′shȧ encouraged the king of Ĭş′ra-el not to give up the city. When it seemed that there could be no hope, Ê-lī′shȧ said to the king, “Hear the word of the Lord, ‘To-morrow, at this hour, in the gate of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, a peck of flour shall be sold for sixty cents, and two pecks of barley for sixty cents.’”

One of the nobles, on whose arm the king was leaning, did not believe Ê-lī′shȧ’s word, and said, scornfully, “If the Lord would make windows in heaven, and rain down wheat and barley, then this might be.” “You shall see it with your own eyes,” answered Ê-lī′shȧ; “but you shall not eat any of the food.”

On the next morning, about daybreak, four men that were lepers were standing together outside the gate of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ. Being lepers, they were not allowed by the laws of Ĭş′ra-el inside the walls of the city. (We have read of leprosy and lepers in the story of Nā′a-man.) These four men said to each other, “What shall we do? If we go into the city we must die there from the want of food; if we stay here we must die. Let us go to the camp of the Sy̆r′ĭ-anş; perhaps they will let us live; and at the worst they can do no more than kill us.”

So the four men went toward the Sy̆r′ĭ-an camp; but as they came near they were surprised to find no one standing on guard. They went into a tent, and found it empty, as though it had been left very suddenly, for there were food, and drink, and garments, and gold, and silver. As no one was there they ate and drank all they needed; and then they took away valuable things and hid them. They looked into another tent, and another, and found them like the first, but not a man was in sight. They walked through the camp; but not a soldier was there, and the tents were left just as they had been when men were living in them.

In the night the Lord had caused the Sy̆r′ĭ-anş to hear a great noise, like the rolling of chariots, and the trampling of horses, and the marching of men. They said to each other, in great fear, "The king of Ĭş′ra-el has sent for the Hĭt′tītes on the north, and the Ê-ġy̆p′tianş on the south, to come against us."



THE LEPERS VISIT A TENT OF THE SYR′Ĭ-ANS.

And so great and so sudden was their terror, that in the night they rose up and fled away, leaving everything in their camp; even leaving their horses tied, and their asses, and all their treasure, and all their food, in their tents.

After a time the lepers said to each other, "We do wrong not to tell this good news in the city. If they found it out, they will blame us for not letting them know, and we may lose our lives on account of it."

So they went up to the gate, and called the men on guard, and told them how they had found the camp of the Sȳr′ĭ-anş, with tents standing, and horses tied, but not a man left. The men on guard told it at the king's palace. But the king, when he heard it, thought that it was a trick of the Sȳr′ĭ-anş to hide themselves, and to draw the men out of the city, so that they might take the city.

The king sent out two men with horses and chariots, and they found that not only had the camp been left, but that the road down the mountains to the river Jôr′dan was covered with garments, and arms, and treasures that the Sȳr′ĭ-anş had thrown away in their wild flight.

The news soon spread through the city of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ; and in a few hours all the city was at the gate. And when the food was brought in from the camp, there was abundance for all the people. And it came to pass as Ē-lī′shȧ had said, a peck of grain, and two pecks of barley were sold for sixty cents in the gate of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ by noon of that day.

The king chose the noble upon whose arm he had leaned the day before to have charge of the gate. So he saw with his own eyes that which the prophet had foretold; but he did not eat of it, for the crowd was so great that the people pressed upon him, and he was trodden under their feet, and killed in the throng.

Thus the king and all the city of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ knew that Ē-lī′shȧ had indeed spoken the word of the Lord.

We have seen how different from the ways of Ē-lī′jah were the ways of Ē-lī′shȧ. Ē-lī′jah lived alone in the wilderness, and never came before kings except to tell them of their evil deeds, and to warn them of punishment. But Ē-lī′shȧ lived in the city, at times even in the city of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, often sent helpful messages to the king, and seemed to be his friend. Both these men were needed, Ē-lī′jah and Ē-lī′shȧ, one to destroy the evil in the land, and the other to build up the good.

Story Sixteen

JEHU, THE FURIOUS DRIVER OF HIS CHARIOT

II Kings viii : 7 to 15; ix : 1, to x : 36.

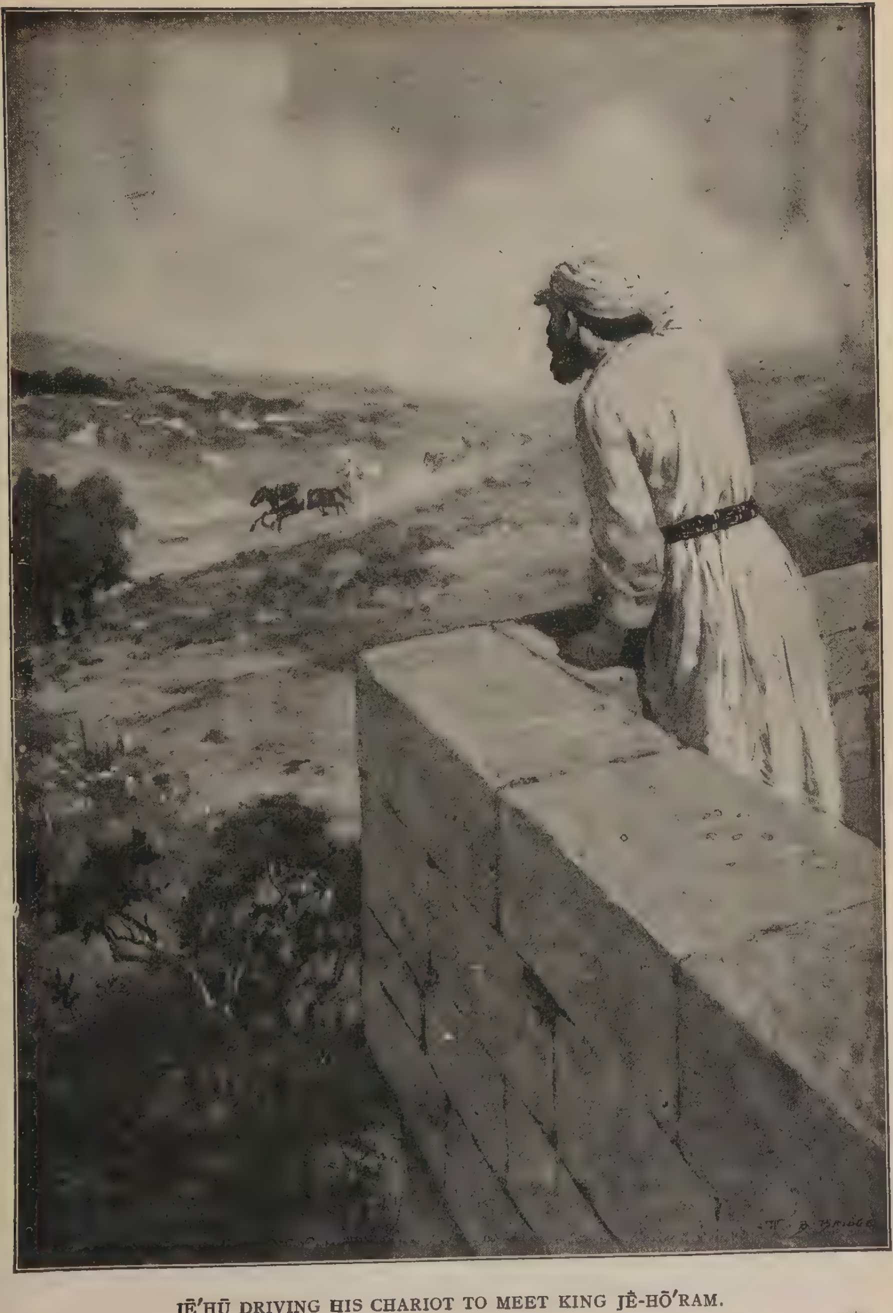
YOU remember that when the Lord came to the prophet Ê-lī′jah at Mount Hō′reb in the wilderness, the Lord gave to Ê-lī′jah a command to anoint or call Hăz′a-el to be king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, and Jē′hū to be king of Ĭş′ra-el. But to prepare the way for these changes of rule a long time was needed, and Ê-lī′jah was taken home to heaven before these men were called to be kings.

The time to call these men had now come, and Ê-lī′shȧ undertook the work that had been left to him by Ê-lī′jah. He went to Dȧ-măs′cus, the chief city of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ; and Bĕn=hā′dăd, the king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, heard that the great prophet of Ĭş′ra-el had come, for the fame of Ê-lī′shȧ's deeds had made his name known through all those lands.

At that time King Bĕn=hā′dăd was ill; and he sent one of his chief princes, whose name was Hăz′a-el, to ask Ê-lī′shȧ whether he would be well again. Hăz′a-el came to meet Ê-lī′shȧ with a rich present, which loaded forty camels, and he spoke to Ê-lī′shȧ with great respect, saying, "Your son, Bĕn=hā′dăd, king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, has sent me to you to ask, 'Shall I become well again from this sickness?'"

And Ê-lī′shȧ said to Hăz′a-el, "You may tell Bĕn=hā′dăd that he will get well; nevertheless, the Lord has shown me that he will surely die."

Then Ê-lī′shȧ looked steadily upon Hăz′a-el's face, until Hăz′a-el felt ashamed, and Ê-lī′shȧ wept as he looked upon him. Hăz′a-el said to him, "Why does my lord weep?" "I weep," said Ê-lī′shȧ, "because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Ĭş′ra-el. You will take their castles, and set them on fire; you will kill their young men, and you will destroy their children."



JĒ′HŪ DRIVING HIS CHARIOT TO MEET KING JĒ-HŌ′RAM.

Hăz′a-el was surprised at this, and said, "I am nothing but a dog; and how can I do such great things?"

And Ḗ-lī′shȧ answered him, "The Lord has shown me that you shall be king over Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ."

Then Hăz′a-el went to King Bĕn=hā′dăd, and said to him, "The man of God told me that you will surely be well from your sickness."

And on the next day Hăz′a-el took the cover from the bed, and dipped it in water, and pressed it tightly over Bĕn=hā′dăd's face, so that he died; and Hăz′a-el reigned in his place as king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. As soon as Hăz′a-el became king, he made war upon the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes; and a battle was fought at Rā′moth=ğĭl′e-ăd, the same place where King Ā′hăb had been slain more than ten years before. In this battle Jė-hō′ram, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, was wounded; and he was taken to Jĕz′re-el, beside the great plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon, there to recover from his wounds. Ā-ha-zī′ah, who was at that time king of Jū′dah, and who was a nephew of Jė-hō′ram, went to Jĕz′re-el to visit him while he was ill from his wounds.

By this time Ḗ-lī′shȧ, the prophet, had returned from his visit to Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. He knew that the time had now come to finish the work in Ĭş′ra-el left to him by Ḗ-lī′jah; and he called one of the sons of the prophets to him, and said, "Rise up, and go to the camp at Rā′moth=ğĭl′e-ăd; and take with you this little bottle of oil. And when you reach Rā′moth=ğĭl′e-ăd, find one of the captains of the army, Jē′hū, the son of Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, the son of Nĭm′shī; and lead him into a room alone, and pour the oil on his head, and say, 'Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed you as king over Ĭş′ra-el.' When you have done this, come back to me at once without waiting."

Then the young man, who was a prophet like Ḗ-lī′shȧ, took the bottle of oil in his hand and went to Rā′moth=ğĭl′e-ăd. In the camp of Ĭş′ra-el he found the captains of the army sitting together. He came suddenly among them, and said, "O captain, I have an errand to you."

And Jē′hū, one of the captains, said to him, "To which one of us is your errand?"

He said to Jē′hū, "My errand is to you alone, O captain."

Then Jē′hū went with the young prophet into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Ĭş′ra-el, 'I have anointed you as king over my people Ĭş′ra-el. And you shall destroy the family of Ā′hăb, because they destroyed the prophets of the Lord. And I will make the house of Ā′hăb like the house of Jĕr-o-bō′am, who made Ĭş′ra-el to sin. And the wild dogs shall eat Jĕz′e-bĕl in the city of Jĕz′re-el, and there shall be no one to bury her.'"

And after he had said this, the prophet opened the door, and went away as suddenly as he had come. Jē′hū came back to the other captains, and sat down again. One of the captains said to him, "Is all well? Why did this wild fellow call you out?"

Jē′hū said to them, "You know the man, and you know what he said to me."

"No, no," they all said, "we do not know. Tell us what he said."

Then Jē′hū told them what the prophet had said, and that he had anointed him as king. This pleased all the captains. At once they took off their outer garments, and spread them as a carpet on the stairs of the house, and at the head of the stairs they placed Jē′hū; and they blew the trumpets and called out to the army, "Jē′hū is the king!"

Jē′hū said to the captains, "Do not let any one go out of the camp to bear word to Jė-hō′ram. I will go myself."

Then Jē′hū made ready his chariot, and rode swiftly toward Jĕz′re-el, his company riding after him. The watchman on the tower at Jĕz′re-el saw him coming, and he called out to King Jė-hō′ram, "I see a company coming toward the city."

Jė-hō′ram thought that they were bearing news of the war with the Sȳr′ĭ-anş. He sent out a man on horseback to meet the company. The man came, and said, "Is all well?"

Jē′hū answered him, "What difference is it to you? Come after me."

Then the man turned, and joined Jē′hū's company; and so did another man whom Jė-hō′ram sent when the first man did not return. And the watchman called out to Jė-hō′ram again, "Two men have gone out to meet the company that is drawing near, but they have not come back; and the man at the head drives like Jē′hū, the son of Nĭm′shī, for he drives furiously."

Then Jė-hō′ram became anxious; he sent for his chariot, and went out to meet Jē′hū; and with him went Ā-ha-zī′ah, the king of Jū′dah, each in his own chariot. It came to pass that they met Jē′hū in the very place which had been the vineyard of Nā′bŏth; the same place where Ā′hăb had met Ė-lī′jah, when that same Jē′hū was standing behind Ā′hăb in his chariot. As Jė-hō′ram drew near to Jē′hū, he called to him, "Is all well, Jē′hū?"

"Can anything be well," answered Jē′hū, "as long as your mother Jĕz′e-bĕl lives, with all her wickedness?"

When Jė-hō′ram heard this he saw that Jē′hū was his enemy. He cried out to King Ā-ha-zī′ah, and turned his chariot, and fled. But he was too late, for Jē′hū drew his bow with all his strength and sent an arrow to his heart. Jė-hō′ram fell down dead in his chariot. Then Jē′hū said to Bĭd′kär, whom he had made his chief captain, "Take away the body of Jė-hō′ram, and throw it into the field where the body of Nā′bŏth was thrown. Do you remember how when you and I were riding in the chariot behind Ā′hăb, his father, the Lord said, 'I have seen the blood of Nā′bŏth on this spot, and the punishment of Ā′hăb and his sons shall be in this place'?"

When Ā-ha-zī′ah, the king of Jū′dah, saw Jė-hō′ram fall, he, too, turned and fled. But Jē′hū pursued him, and ordered his followers to kill him. So Ā-ha-zī′ah, the son of Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, and grandson of Ā′hăb (for his mother, Ăth-a-lī′ah, was a daughter of Jĕz′e-bĕl), he also died at the hand of Jē′hū. His servants took the body of Ā-ha-zī′ah to Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm, and buried it there.

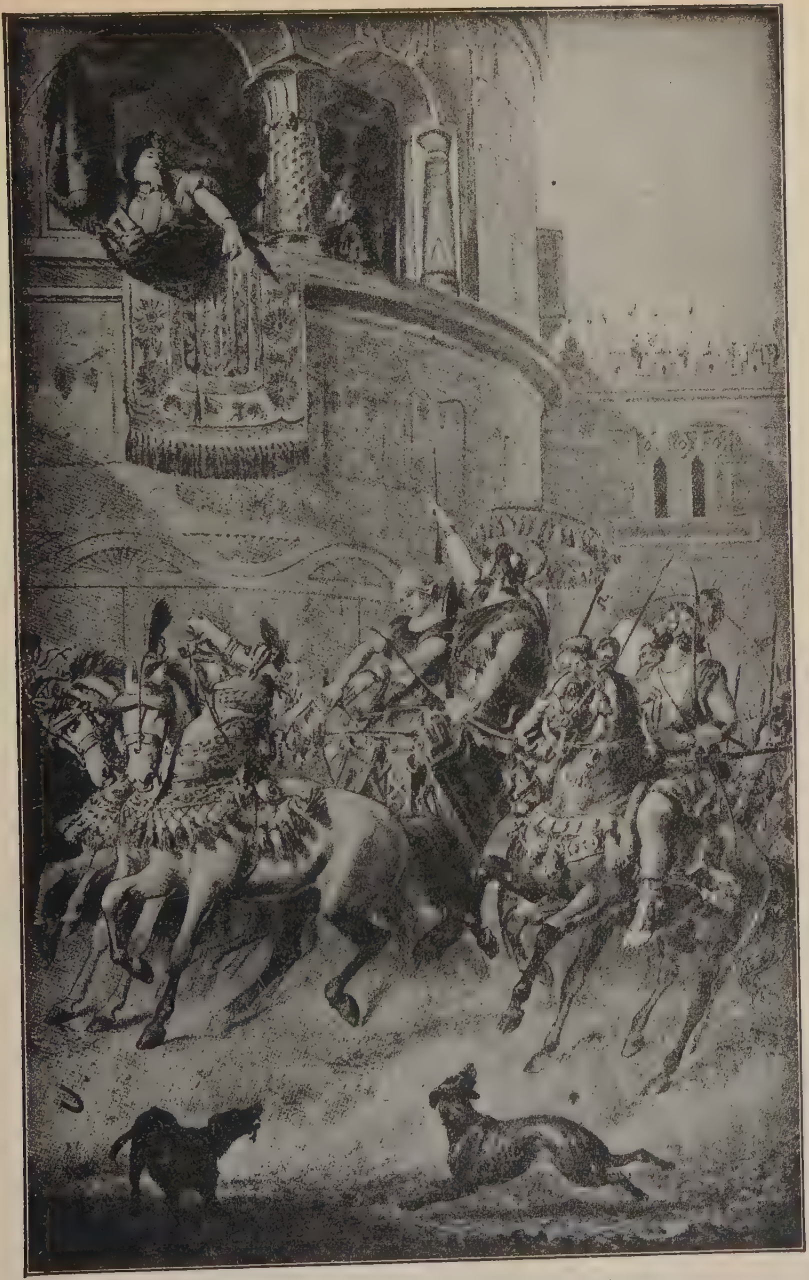
When Jē′hū rode into the city of Jez′rĕ-el Queen Jĕz′e-bĕl knew that her end had come; but she met it boldly, like a queen. She put on her royal robes, and a crown upon her head, and sat by the window, waiting for Jē′hū to come. As he drew near, she called out to him, "Good day to you, Jē′hū, you who are like Zĭm′rī, the murderer of your master!"

You have read of Zĭm′rī, who slew King Ē′lah, and was himself burned in his palace seven days after. (See Story Three in this Part.) Jē′hū looked up to the window, and called out, "Who is on my side? Who?"

And some men looked out to him, and he said, "Throw her out of the window."

They threw her down, and her blood was spattered on the wall and on the horses. King Jē′hū came into the palace, and sat down as master, and ate and drank. Then he said, "Take up the body of that wicked woman, Jĕz′e-bĕl, and bury her, for, though wicked, she was the daughter of a king."

But when they looked on the pavement there was nothing left



JĔZ′E-BĔL CALLS FROM THE WINDOW TO JĒ′HŪ.

of her except her skull, and the bones of her feet and her hands, for the wild dogs of the city had eaten her body; and thus the wicked life of Jĕz′e-bĕl came to an end, and the word of the Lord by the prophet Ē-lī′jah came to pass. And Jē′hū slew all the sons of Ā′hăb, and their children with them, so that not one of Ā′hăb's family was left alive. When Jē′hū saw that he was safe and strong on the throne, he sent out a message to all the worshippers of Bā′al, the idol which Jĕz′e-bĕl and the house of Ā′hăb had brought into Ĭş′ra-el. This message was, "Ā′hăb served Bā′al a little, but Jē′hū will serve him much. Now, let all the priests of Bā′al meet in the temple of Bā′al in Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ."

They came by hundreds, hoping that Jē′hū would be their friend as Ā′hăb and his family had been. But when they were all in the temple, he brought an army of his soldiers, and placed them on guard around it; and when no one could escape, he gave the order, "Go into the temple and kill all the priests of Bā′al; let not one get away alive."

And this was done in a cruel manner. He killed all the prophets and priests of Bā′al, and tore down the temple of Bā′al in Să-mā′rĭ-ȧ.

But though Jē′hū broke up the worship of Bā′al, he did not worship the Lord God of Ĭş′ra-el as he should. He continued to serve the golden calves which Jĕr-o-bō′am had set up long before at Bĕth′=el and at Dăn. And the Lord sent a prophet to Jē′hū, who said to him, "Because you have done my will in destroying the house of Ā′hăb, and in destroying those that worshipped Bā′al, your children to the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Ĭş′ra-el."

On account of the many sins of the people of Ĭş′ra-el the Lord began in the days of Jē′hū to take away the land of the Ten Tribes. Hăz′a-el, the new king of Sỹr′ĭ-ȧ, made war on Jē′hū, and conquered all the land on the east of the Jôr′dan, from the brook Ăr′nŏn to the land of Bā′shăn in the north; so all that was left of Ĭş′ra-el was the country on the west of Jôr′dan, from Bĕth′=el northward to Dăn.

Story Seventeen

ELISHA AND THE BOW; JONAH AND NINEVEH

II Kings xiii : 1 to 25; Jonah i : 1, to iv : 11.

AFTER Jē′hū, his son Jė-hō′a-hăz reigned in Ĭş′ra-el. He was not only a wicked but also a weak king; and under him Ĭş′ra-el became helpless in the hands of its enemies, Hăz′a-el, the fierce king of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, and his son, Bĕn=hā′dăd the second. But when Jė-hō′a-hăz died, his son Jō′ăsh became king, and under his rule Ĭş′ra-el began to rise again.

Ê-lī′shȧ, the prophet, was now an old man, and very feeble, and near to death. The young king, Jō′ăsh, came to see him, and wept over him, and said to him, as Ê-lī′shȧ himself had said to Ê-lī′jah, "My father, my father, you are to Ĭş′ra-el more than its chariots and its horsemen!"

But Ê-lī′shȧ, though weak in body, was yet strong in soul. He told King Jō′ăsh to bring to him a bow and arrows, and to open the window to the east, looking toward the land of Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. Then Ê-lī′shȧ caused the king to draw the bow, and he placed his hands on the king's hands. And as the king shot an arrow, Ê-lī′shȧ said, "This is the Lord's arrow of victory, of victory over Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, for you shall smite the Sy̆r′ĭ-anş in Ā′phek, and shall destroy them."

Then Ê-lī′shȧ told the king to take the arrows, and to strike with them on the ground. The king struck them on the ground three times, and then stopped striking. The old prophet was displeased at this, and said, "Why did you stop? You should have struck the ground five or six times; then you would have won as many victories over Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ; but now you shall beat the Sy̆r′ĭ-anş three times, and no more."

Soon after this Ê-lī′shȧ died, and they buried him in a cave. In the spring of the next year the bands of the Mō′ab-ītes came upon the place just as they were burying another man, and in their haste to escape from the enemies they placed the body in the cave where Ē-lī′shȧ was buried. When the body of this man touched the body of the dead prophet, life came to it, and the man stood up. Thus, even after Ē-lī′shȧ was dead, he still had power.

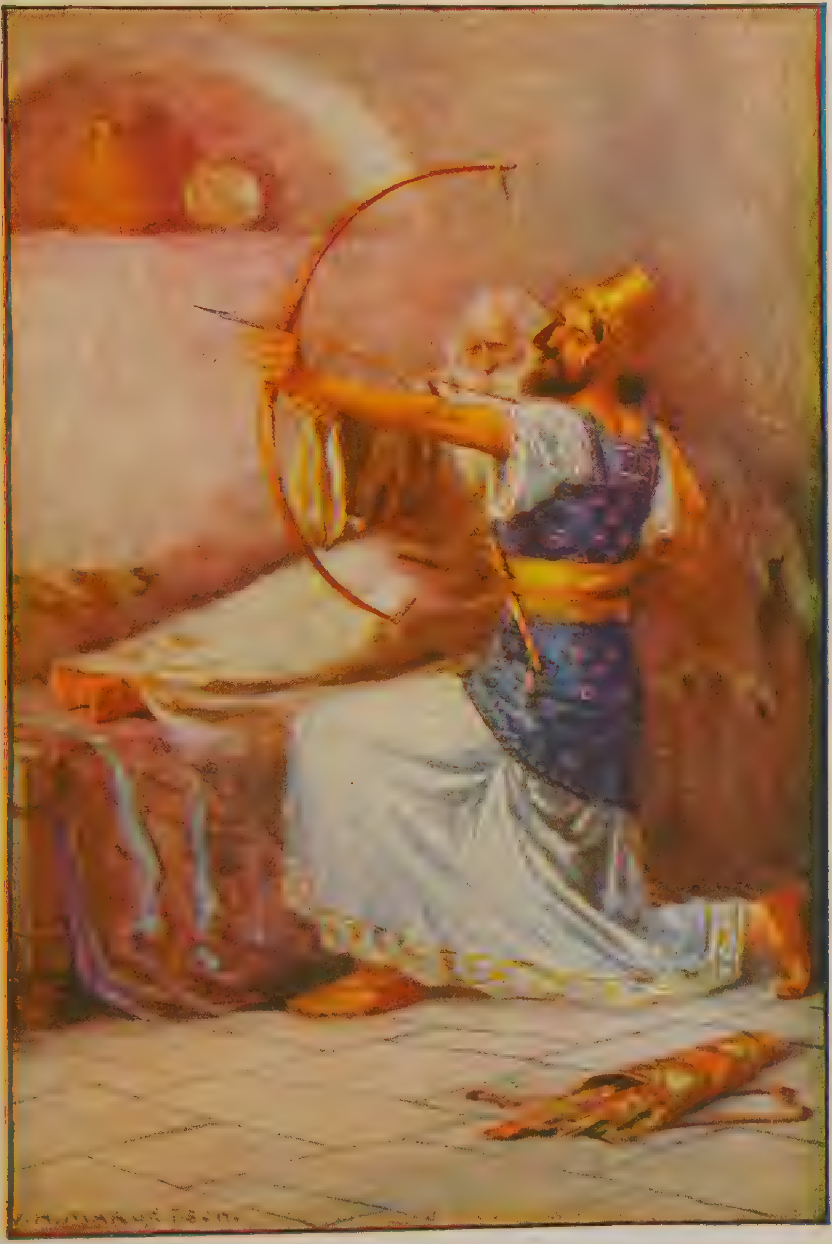
After the death of Ē-lī′shȧ, Jō′ăsh, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, made war upon Bĕn-hā′dăd the second, king of Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ. Jō′ăsh beat him three times in battle, and took from him all the cities that Hăz′a-el, his father, had taken away from Ĭş′ra-el. And after Jō′ăsh, his son Jĕr-o-bō′am the second reigned, who became the greatest of all the kings of the Ten Tribes. Under him the kingdom grew rich and strong. He conquered nearly all Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, and made Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ the greatest city in all those lands.

But though Sȳr′ĭ-ȧ went down, another nation was now rising to power, Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ, on the eastern side of the river Tī′gris. Its capital was Nĭn′e-veh, a great city, so vast that it would take three days for a man to walk around its walls. The Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-anş were beginning to conquer all the lands near them, and Ĭş′ra-el was in danger of falling under their power. At this time another prophet, named Jō′nah, was giving the word of the Lord to the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. To Jō′nah the Lord spoke, saying, "Go to Nĭn′e-veh, that great city, and preach to it, for its wickedness rises up before me."

But Jō′nah did not wish to preach to the people of Nĭn′e-veh, for they were the enemies of his land, the land of Ĭş′ra-el. He wished Nĭn′e-veh to die in its sins, and not turn to God and live. So Jō′nah tried to go away from the city where God had sent him. He went down to Jŏp′pȧ, upon the shore of the Great Sea. There he found a ship about to sail to Tär′shish, far away in the west. He paid the fare, and went on board, intending to go as far as possible from Nĭn′e-veh.

But the Lord saw Jō′nah on the ship, and the Lord sent a great storm upon the sea, so that the ship seemed as though it would go in pieces. The sailors threw overboard everything on the ship, and when they could do no more, every man prayed to his god to save the ship and themselves. Jō′nah was now lying fast asleep under the deck of the ship, and the ship's captain came to him and said, "What do you mean by sleeping in such a time as this? Awake, rise up, and call upon your God. Perhaps your God will hear you, and will save our lives."

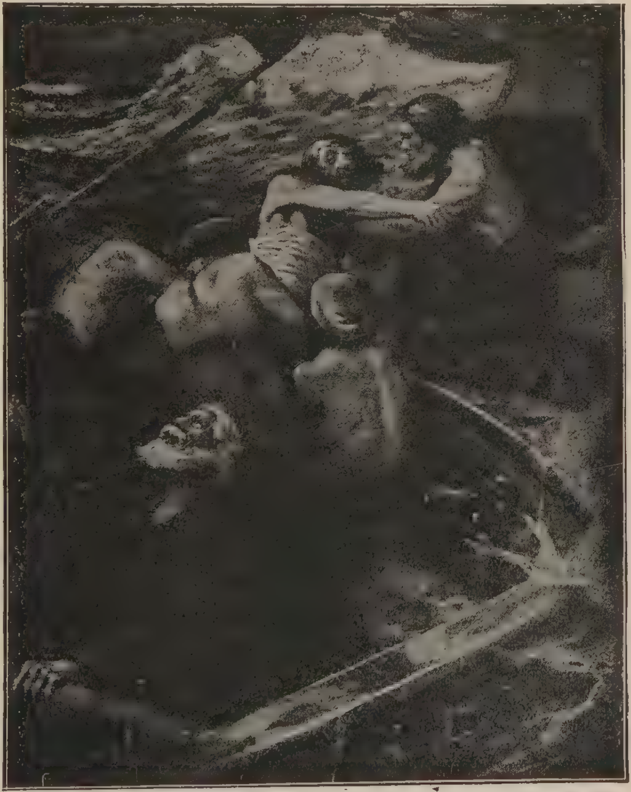
STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



KING JOASH SHOOTING THE ARROW

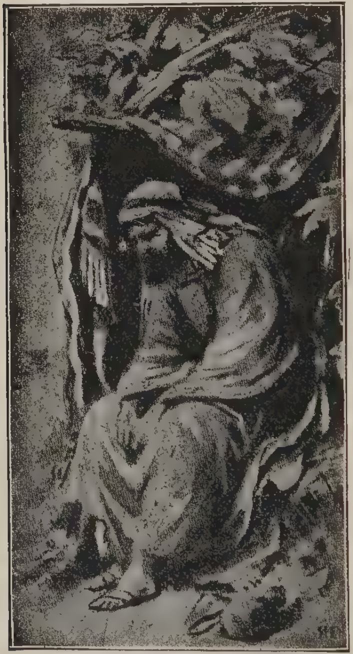
But the storm continued to rage around the ship, and they said, "There is some man on this ship who has brought upon us this trouble. Let us cast lots, and find who it is."

Then they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jō'nah. They said to him, all at once, "Tell us, who are you? From what country do you come? What is your business? To what people do you belong? Why have you brought all this trouble upon us?" Then Jō'nah told them the whole story; how he came from the land of Ĭş'ra-el and, that he had fled away from the presence of the Lord. And they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the storm may cease?" Then Jō'nah said, "Take me up, and throw me into the sea; then the storm will cease, and the waters will be calm; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."


JŌ'NAH THROWN OVERBOARD BY THE SAILORS.

But the men were not willing to throw Jō'nah into the sea. They rowed hard to bring the ship to the land, but they could not. Then they cried unto the Lord, and said, "We pray thee, O Lord, we pray thee, let us not die for this man's life; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee." At last, when they could do nothing else to save themselves, they threw Jō'nah into the sea. At once the storm ceased, and the waves became still. Then the men on the ship feared the Lord greatly. They offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made promises to serve him.

And the Lord caused a great fish to swallow up Jō'nah; and Jō'nah was alive within the fish for three days and three nights. Long afterward, when Jē'ṣus was on the earth, he said that as Jō'nah was three days inside the fish, so he would be three days in the earth; so Jō'nah in the fish was like a prophecy of Chrīst. In the fish Jō'nah cried to the Lord; and the Lord heard his prayer, and caused the great fish to throw up Jō'nah upon the dry land.


JŌ'NAH AND HIS GOURD.

By this time Jō'nah had learned that some men who worshipped idols were kind in their hearts, and were dear to the Lord. This was the lesson that God meant Jō'nah to learn; and now the call of the Lord came to Jō'nah a second time.

"Arise; go to Nĭn'e-veh, that great city, and preach to it what I command you."

So Jō'nah went to the city of Nĭn'e-veh, and as he entered into it, he called out to the people, "Within forty days shall Nĭn'e-veh be destroyed." And he walked through the city all day, crying out only this, "Within forty days shall Nĭn'e-veh be destroyed."

And the people of Nĭn'e-veh believed the word of the Lord as spoken by Jō'nah. They turned away from their sins, and fasted, and sought the Lord, from the greatest of them even to the least. The king of Nĭn'e-veh arose from his throne, and laid aside his royal robes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes, as a sign of his sorrow. And the king sent out a command to his people, that they should fast, and seek the Lord, and turn from sin.

And God saw that the people of Nĭn′e-veh were sorry for their wickedness, and he forgave them, and did not destroy their city. But this made Jō′nah very angry. He did not wish to have Nĭn′e-veh spared, because it was the enemy of his own land, and also he feared that men would call him a false prophet when his word did not come to pass. And Jō′nah said to the Lord:

"O Lord, I was sure that it would be thus, that thou wouldest spare the city; and for that reason I tried to flee away; for I knew that thou wast a gracious God, full of pity, slow to anger, and rich in mercy. Now, O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live."

And Jō′nah went out of the city, and built a little hut on the east side of it, and sat under its roof, to see whether God would keep the word that he had spoken. Then the Lord caused a plant with thick leaves called a gourd to grow up, and to shade Jō′nah from the sun; and Jō′nah was glad, and sat under its shadow. But a worm destroyed the plant; and the next day a hot wind blew, and Jō′nah suffered from the heat; and again Jō′nah wished that he might die. And the Lord said to Jō′nah, "You were sorry to see the plant die, though you did not make it grow, and though it came up in a night and died in a night. And should not I have pity on Nĭn′e-veh, that great city, where are more than a hundred thousand little children, and also many cattle, all helpless and knowing nothing?"

And Jō′nah learned that men, and women, and little children, are all precious in the sight of the Lord, even though they know not God.

In most of the books of the Old Testament, we read of the Ĭş′ra-el-īte people, and of God's care of them; but we do not find in the Old Testament much about God as the Father of all men of every nation and every land. The book of Jō′nah stands almost alone in the Old Testament, as showing that God loves people of other nations than Ĭş′ra-el. Even the people of Nĭn′e-veh, who worshipped images, were under God's love; God was ready to hear their prayer and to save them. So the book of Jō′nah shows us God as "our Heavenly Father."

Story Eighteen

HOW THE TEN TRIBES WERE LOST

II Kings xv : 8, to xvii : 41.

THE power and peace that Jū′dah enjoyed under Jĕr-o-bō′am the second did not last after his death. His great kingdom fell apart, and his son Zăch-a-rī′ah reigned only six months. He was slain in the sight of his people by Shăl′lum, who made himself king. But after only a month of rule, Shăl′lum himself was killed by Mĕn′a-hĕm, who reigned ten years of wickedness and of suffering in the land, for the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş spoiled the land and took away the riches of Ĭş′ra-el. Then came Pĕk-a-hī′ah, who was slain by Pē′kah, and Hȯ-shē′ȧ, who in turn slew Pē′kah. So nearly all the latter kings of Ĭş′ra-el won the throne by murder, and were themselves slain. The land was helpless, and its enemies, the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş from Nĭn′e-veh, won victories, and carried away many of the people, and robbed those who were left. All these evils came upon the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes, because they and their kings had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers and worshipped idols.

Hȯ-shē′ȧ was the last of the kings over the Ten Tribes; nineteen kings in all, from Jĕr-o-bō′am to Hȯ-shē′ȧ. In Hȯ-shē′ȧ's time, the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, whose name was Shăl-man-ē′şēr, came up with a great army against Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ. He laid siege against the city; but it was in a strong place, and hard to take, for it stood on a high hill. The siege lasted three years, and before it was ended, Shăl-man-ē′şēr, the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, died, and Sär′gon, a great warrior and conqueror, reigned in his place. Sär′gon took Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and put to death Hȯ-shē′ȧ the last king of Ĭş′ra-el. He carried away nearly all the people from the land, and led them into distant countries in the east, to Mĕs-o-pȯ-tā′mĭ-ȧ, to Mē′dĭ-ȧ, and the lands near the great Caspian Sea. This Sär′gon did, in order to keep the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes from again breaking away from his rule.

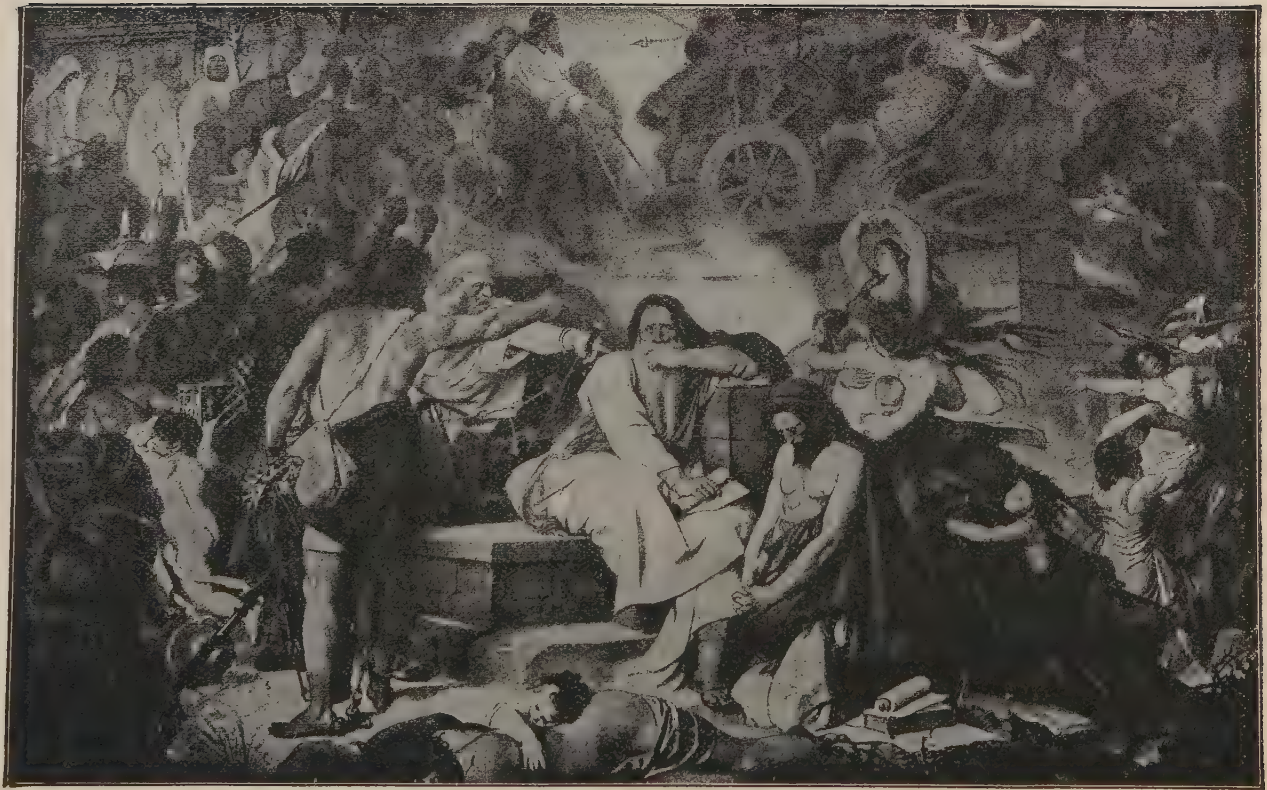
As in their own land the children of Ĭş′ra-el had forsaken the

Lord and had worshipped idols, so after they were taken to these distant lands they sought the gods of the people among whom they were living. They married the people of those lands, and ceased to be Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes; and after a time they lost all knowledge of their own God, who had given them his words and sent them his prophets. So there came an end to the Ten Tribes of Ĭṣ′ra-el, for they never again came back to their own land, and were lost among the peoples of the far east.

But a small part of the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el were left in their own land. The king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ brought to the land of Ĭṣ′ra-el people from other countries, and placed them in the land. But they were too few to fill the land, and to care for it; so that the wild beasts began to increase in Ĭṣ′ra-el, and many of these strange people were killed by lions who lived among the mountains and in the valleys. They thought that the lions came upon them because they did not worship the God who ruled in that land, and they sent to the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, saying, "Send us a priest who can teach us how to worship the God to whom this land belongs; for he has sent lions among us, and they are destroying us."

They supposed that each land must have its own God, as the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneṣ worshipped Dā′gon, and the Mō′ab-ītes Chē′mosh, and the Ty̆r′ĭ-anṣ and Zī-dō′nĭ-anṣ, Bā′al and the Ăsh-ē′rah. They did not know that there is only one God, who rules all the world, and who is to be worshipped by all men.

Then the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ sent to these people a priest from among the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes in his land; and this priest tried to teach them how to worship the Lord. But with the Lord's worship, they mingled the worship of idols; and did not serve the Lord only, as God would have them serve him. In after time these people were called Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanṣ, from Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, which had been their chief city. They had their temple to the Lord on Mount Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm, near the city of Shē′chem, and in that city a few of them are found even in our time.



THE PROPHET JĔR-E-MĪ′AH WHEN JĒ-RỤ′SĂ-LĔM WAS TAKEN BY THE CHĂL-DĒ′ANȘ

Part Fifth

Stories of the People and Kingdom of Judah

Story One

THE FIRST FOUR KINGS OF JUDAH

II Chronicles xii : 1, to xx : 37.

NOW we turn from the story of the kingdom of Ĭş′ra-el in the north to the story of the kingdom of Jū′dah in the south. You read how the Ten Tribes broke away from the rule of King Rē-ho-bō′am and set up a kingdom of their own under Jĕr-o-bō′am. This division left the kingdom of Jū′dah very small and weak. It reached from the Dead Sea westward to the land of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş on the shore of the Great Sea, and from Bē-er=shē′bȧ on the south not quite to Bĕth=el on the north; but it held some control over the land of Ē′dom on the south of the Dead Sea. Its chief city was Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, where stood the Temple of the Lord and the palace of the king.

After Rē-ho-bō′am found that he could no more rule over the Ten Tribes he tried to make his own little kingdom strong by building cities and raising an army of soldiers. But he did not look to the Lord, as his grandfather Dā′vid had looked; he allowed his people to worship idols, so that soon on almost every hill and in almost every grove of trees there was an image of stone or wood. God was not pleased with Rē-ho-bō′am and his people, because they had forsaken him for idols. He brought upon the land of Jū′dah a great army from Ē′ġy̆pt, led by Shī′shăk, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt. They marched over all the land of Jū′dah they took the city of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, and they robbed the Temple of all the great treasure in gold and silver which Sŏl′o-mon had stored up. This evil came upon Jū′dah because its king and its people had turned away from the Lord their God.

After Rē-ho-bō′am had reigned seventeen years he died, and his son Ȧ-bī′jah became king of Jū′dah. When Jĕr-o-bō′am, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, made war upon him, Ȧ-bī′jah led his army into the land of Ĭş′ra-el. But Jĕr-o-bō′am's army was twice as large as Ȧ-bī′jah's, and his men stood not only in front of the men of Jū′dah but also behind them, so that the army of Jū′dah was in great danger of being destroyed. But Ȧ-bī′jah told his men to trust in the Lord, and to fight bravely in the Lord's name. And God helped the men of Jū′dah against Ĭş′ra-el, and they won a great victory; so that Jĕr-o-bō′am never again came against Jū′dah.

Ȧ-bī′jah's reign was short, only three years; and after him came Ā′sȧ, his son, who was a great warrior, a great builder of cities, and a wise ruler. Against Ā′sȧ a great army of enemies came up from Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-a, which was south of Ē′ġy̆pt. Ā′sȧ drew out his little army against the Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-anş at a place called Mȧ-rē′shah, in the south of Jū′dah, near the desert. He had no hope of success in his soldiers, because they were so few and the enemies were so many. But Ā′sȧ called upon the Lord, and said:

"O Lord, it makes no difference to thee whether there are few or many. Help us, O Lord, for we trust in thee; and in thy name we fight this vast multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man succeed against thee."

The Lord heard Ā′sȧ's prayer, and gave him a great victory over the Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-anş. Ā′sȧ took again the cities in the south which had gone over to the side of the Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-anş, and he brought to Jė-ru̇′sȧ-lĕm great riches, and flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle. and camels, which he had taken from his enemies.

Then the Lord sent to Ā′sȧ a prophet named Ăz-a-rī′ah. He said, "Hear me, King Ā′sȧ, and all Jū′dah and Bĕn′ja-mĭn. The Lord is with you while you are with him. If you seek him you shall find him; but if you forsake the Lord he will forsake you. Now be strong, and put away the wickedness out of the land, and the Lord shall reward your work."

Then Ā′sȧ rebuilt the altar of the Lord which had fallen into decay, and he called upon his people to worship. He went through the land, and broke down the idols, and burned them. He found that his own mother, the queen, had made an idol, and he cut it down and broke it in pieces; and he would not allow her to be queen any longer, because she had worshipped idols.

Until Ā′sȧ was old he served the Lord; but in his old age he became sick, and in his sickness he did not seek the Lord. He turned to men who called themselves physicians or doctors, but they were men who tried to cure by the power of idols. This led many of Ā′sȧ's people to worship images, so that when he died there were again idols throughout the land.

Ā′sȧ's son, Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, was the next king, and he was the wisest and strongest of all the kings of Jū′dah, and ruled over the largest realm of any. When he became king Ā′hăb was king of Ĭş′ra-el. Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt made peace with Ĭş′ra-el, and united with the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes against the kingdom of Sўr′ĭ-ȧ. He fought against the Sўr′ĭ-anş in the battle at Rā′moth-ğĭl′e-ăd, where King Ā′hăb was slain, and afterward with Ā′hăb's son, Jė-hō′ram, he fought against the Mō′ab-ītes.

THE VALLEY OF JĒ-HŎSH′A-PHĂT AT JĒ-RṲ′SĀ-LĔM AS SEEN TO-DAY.

Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt served the Lord with all his heart. He took away the idols that had again arisen in the land; he called upon his people to worship the Lord, and he sent princes and priests throughout all Jū′dah to read to the people the law of the Lord and to teach the people how to serve the Lord.

The Lord gave to Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt great power. He ruled over the land of Ē′dom, over the wilderness on the south, and over the cities of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneş upon the coast. And Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt chose judges for the cities in all the land, and he said to them:

"Remember that you are not judging for men, but for the Lord; and the Lord is with you, and sees all your acts. Therefore fear the Lord, and do his will. Do not allow men to make you presents, so that you will favor them; but be just toward all, and be strong in doing right."

At one time news came to King Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt that some of the nations on the east and south and north, Mō′ab-ītes, Ăm′mon-ītes, and Sўr′ĭ-anş, had banded together against him, and were encamped with a great army at Ĕn-ḡē′dī, near the Dead Sea. Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt called forth his soldiers, but before they went to battle he led them to the Temple to worship the Lord. And Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt called upon the Lord for help, saying:

"O Lord, the God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? Dost thou not rule over the nations of earth? Is not power thine, so that none can stand against thee? Now, Lord, look upon these hosts who have come against thy people. We have no might against this great company, and we know not what to do; but our eyes look toward thee for help."

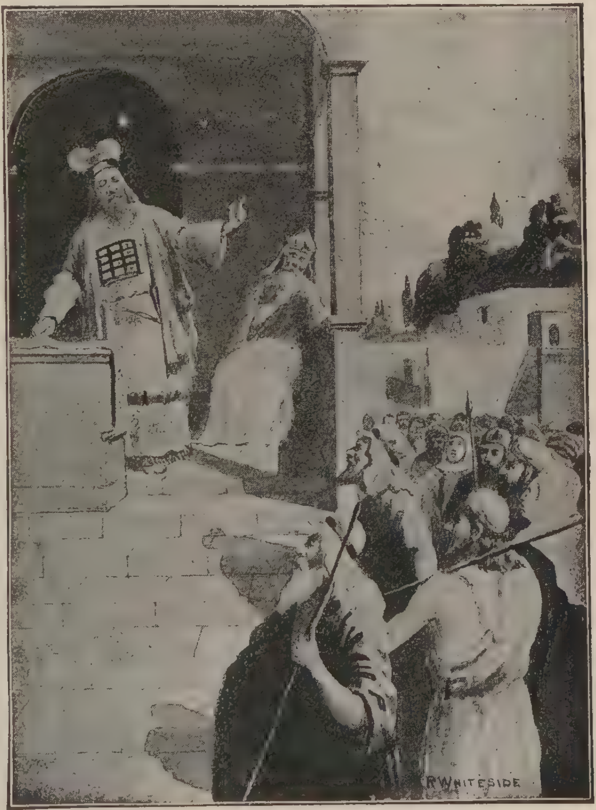
Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon one of the Lē′vītes, a man named Jȧ-hā′zĭ-el, and he said:

"Hear, ye men of Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm and Jū′dah, and hear, O King Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt. Thus saith the Lord, 'Fear not this great host of your enemies, for the battle is not yours, but the Lord's. Go out against them; but you will not need to fight. You shall stand still, and see how the Lord will save you. Do not fear, for the Lord is with you!'"

Then Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt and all his people worshipped the Lord, bowing with their faces on the ground. And the next day, when they marched against the enemies, the Lē′vītes walked in front, singing and praising the Lord, while all the people answered:

"Give thanks to the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever."

When the men of Jū′dah came to the camp of their enemies, they found that a quarrel had risen up among them. The Am′mon-ītes and the Mō′ab-ītes began to fight with the rest of the bands, and soon all the host were fighting and killing each other. And when the men of Jū′dah came, part of the host were lying dead, and the rest had fled away into the desert, leaving behind them great treasure. So it came to pass as the prophet Ăz-a-rī′ah had said, they did not fight, but the Lord fought for them, and saved them from their foes.



THE PRIESTS TEACH THE PEOPLE.

The place where this strange battle had taken place they named "the valley of Bĕr′-a-çhah," which means "blessing," because there they blessed the Lord for the help that he had given them. And afterward they came back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm with songs, and praises, and the great riches which they had taken. And God gave to King Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt peace and rest from his enemies, and great power as long as he lived.

Story Two

THE LITTLE BOY WHO WAS CROWNED KING

II Chronicles xxi : 1, to xxiv : 27.

JĖ-HŎSH'A-PHĂT, the king of Jū'dah, was a good man and a wise king, but he made one mistake which brought great trouble upon his family and upon his land in after days. He married his son Jė-hō'ram to Ăth-a-lī'ah, the daughter of Ā'hăb and the wicked Jĕz'e-bĕl. When Jė-hŏsh'a-phăt died and Jė-hō'ram became king of Jū'dah, his wife, Ăth-a-lī'ah, led him into all the wickedness of the house of Ā'hăb. Jė-hō'ram killed all his brothers, the sons of Jė-hŏsh'a-phăt, so that no one of them might rise up against him. His queen Ăth-a-lī'ah, set up idols all around Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lem and in Jū'dah, and led the people in worshipping them.

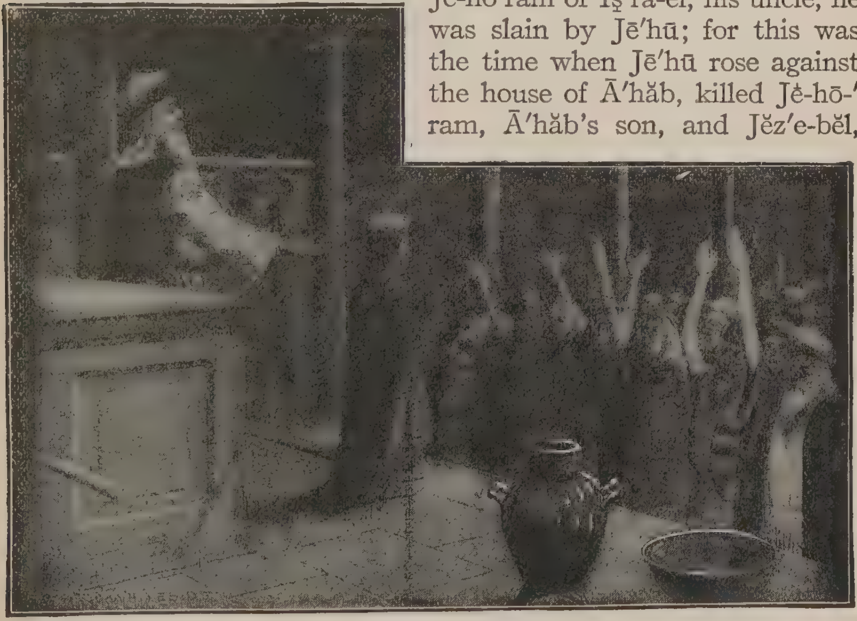
The prophet Ė̄-lī'jah was still living in Ĭş'ra-el when Jė-hō'ram began to reign in Jū'dah. He sent to King Jė-hō'ram a letter containing a message from the Lord. He wrote:

"Thus saith the Lord, the God of Dā'vid, 'Because you have not walked in the ways of your father, Jė-hŏsh'a-phăt, but have walked in the ways of the kings of Ĭş'ra-el, and have led the people of Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm and of Jū'dah to turn from the Lord to idols, and because you have slain your brothers, who were better than you, therefore the Lord will strike you and your house, and your people; and you shall have a terrible disease that none can cure.'"

And after this great troubles came upon Jė-hō'ram and his land. The Ē'dom-ītes on the south, who had been under the rule of Jū'dah since the days of Dā'vid, broke away from King Jė-hō'ram and set up a kingdom of their own. The Phĭ-lĭs'tĭneş on the west and the Ā-rā'bĭ-anş of the desert madẹ war upon him. They broke into his palace, and carried away his treasures, and killed all his children except one, the youngest.

And upon Jė-hō′ram himself fell a sickness that lasted many years, and caused him great suffering. No cure could be found, and after long years of pain Jė-hō′ram died. So evil had been his reign of eight years that no one was sorry to have him die, and they would not allow his body to be buried among the kings of Jū′dah.

After Jė-hō′ram his youngest son, Ā-ha-zī′ah, became king. His mother was the wicked Ăth-a-lī′ah, the daughter of Jĕz′e-bĕl. Ā-ha-zī′ah reigned only one year; for while he was visiting King Jė-hō′ram of Ĭş′ra-el, his uncle, he was slain by Jē′hū; for this was the time when Jē′hū rose against the house of Ā′hăb, killed Jė-hō′ram, Ā′hăb's son, and Jĕz′e-bĕl, Ā′hăb's widow, and made himself king of Ĭş′ra-el. But Jē′hū gave to the body of Ā′ha-zī′ah a king's burial, for he said, "He was the son of Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt, who sought the Lord with all his heart."



THE LITTLE JŌ′ĂSH IS CROWNED KING.

When Ăth-a-lī′ah, the mother of Ā-ha-zī′ah, heard that her son was dead, all the fierceness of her mother Jĕz′e-bĕl arose in her. She seized the princes who belonged to the family of Dā′vid and killed them, so that there was not a man of the royal line left. And she made herself the queen and ruler over the land of Jū′dah. She shut up the house of the Lord, and built a temple for Bā′al; and for six years led the people of Jū′dah in all wickedness.

In the slaughter of the royal family by Ăth-a-lī′ah one little child of Ā-ha-zī′ah had been saved alive. His name was Jō′ăsh. He was a baby, only a year old when his grandmother, Ăth-a-lī′ah, seized the throne, and his aunt, a sister of Ā-ha-zī′ah and the wife of the priest Jė-hoi′a-dȧ, hid him in the Temple of the Lord, and kept him safe from the hate of Queen Ăth-a-lī′ah, There he stayed for six years, while Jė-hoi′a-dȧ, the priest, was preparing to make him king.

When all things were ready, and little Jō′ăsh was seven years old, Jė-hoi′a-dȧ, the priest, brought him out of his hiding-place, and set him before the people and the rulers in the temple, and placed the crown upon his head. Then all the people shouted, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

Queen Ăth-a-lī′ah heard the noise of the shouting, and came out of her palace to see what had taken place. She saw the little boy-king standing by a pillar in the Temple, with the crown upon his head, and around him the soldiers and the people, crying aloud, "Long live the king!"

Ăth-a-lī′ah was very angry as she saw all this. She called for her servants and her soldiers to break up this gathering of the people, and to take the boy-king. But no one would follow her, for they were tired of her cruel rule, and they wished to have for their king one who came from the line of Dā′vid.

Jė-hoi′a-dȧ said to the soldiers, "Take this woman a prisoner, and carry her out of the Temple of the Lord. Let not her blood be spilled in the holy house."

So they seized Ăth-a-lī′ah, and dragged her out of the Temple, and killed her. Then Jė-hoi′a-dȧ and all the people made a promise to serve the Lord only. They tore down the house of the idol Bā′al, and destroyed the images, and broke its altar in pieces. They made the Temple holy once more, and set the house in order, and offered the sacrifices, and held the daily worship before the altar. And all the people were glad to have a descendant of Dā′vid, one of the royal line, once more on the throne of Jū′dah.

As long as Jė-hoi′a-dȧ the good priest lived, Jō′ăsh ruled well, and his people served the Lord. When King Jō′ăsh grew up he wished to have the Temple of the Lord made new and beautiful; for in the years that had passed since the Temple had been built by

Sŏl′o-mon, it had grown old, and had fallen into decay. Then, too, Queen Ăth-a-lī′ah and the men who worshipped Bā′al had broken down the walls in many places, and they had carried away the gold and the silver of the Temple to use in the worship of Bā′al.

At first King Jō′ăsh told the priests and Lē′vītes, who served in the Temple, to go through the land; and ask the people for money to be spent in the fitting up of the Temple. But the priests and the Lē′vītes were slow in the work, and the king tried another plan for getting the money that was needed.

He caused a large box or chest to be made, and had it placed at the door of the Temple, so that all would see it when they went to worship the Lord. In the lid of the box was a hole through which they dropped money into the box. And the king caused word to be sent through all the land that the princes and the people should bring gifts of money, and drop it into the chest, whenever they came to the Temple.

The people were glad, and brought their gifts willingly; for they all wished to have God's house made beautiful. In a short time the box was full of gold and silver. Then the king's officers opened the box, and tied up the money in bags, and placed the bags of money in a safe place. The box was filled with gold and silver many times, until there was money in abundance to pay for all the work needed in the Temple, and for making new ornaments of gold and silver for the house.

When Jė-hoi′a-dȧ, the good priest, was very old, he died; and after his death there was no one to keep King Jō′ăsh in the right way. The princes of the land loved to worship idols, and did not serve God, and they led King Jō′ăsh into wicked ways after he had done so well. God was not pleased with Jō′ăsh after he forsook the Lord, and God allowed the Sȳr′ĭ-anş from the north to come upon the land. They robbed the cities and left Jō′ăsh sick and poor. Soon after the coming of the Sȳr′ĭ-anş his own servants killed him, and made Ăm-a-zī′ah, his son, king in his place.

Story Three

THREE KINGS AND A GREAT PROPHET.

II Chronicles xxv : 1, to xxviii : 27; Isaiah vi.

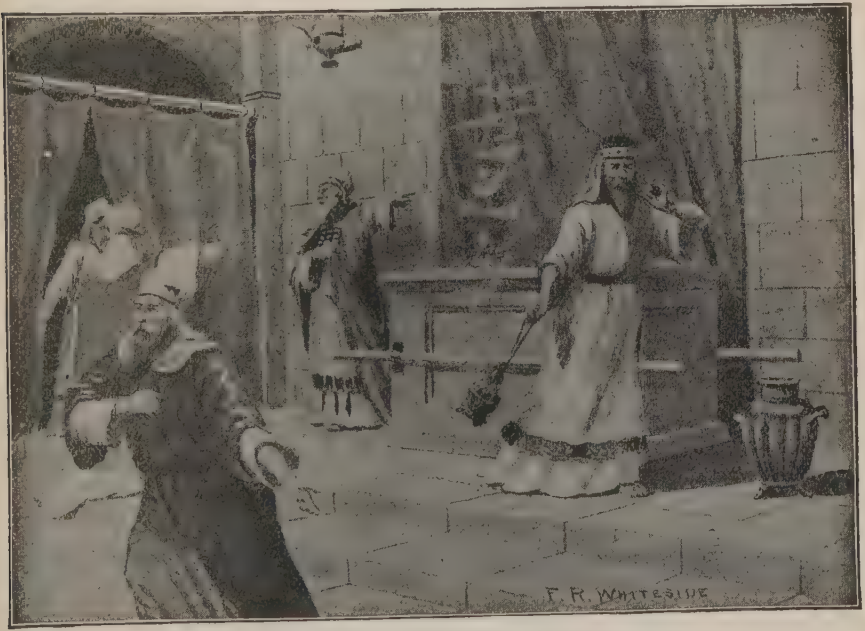
AM-A-ZĪ′AH was the ninth of the kings of Jū′dah, if the years of Ăth-a-lī′ah's rule be counted as a separate reign. Ăm-a-zī′ah worshipped the Lord, but he did not serve the Lord with a perfect heart. He gathered an army of three hundred thousand men, to make war on Ē′dom, and bring its people again under the rule of Jū′dah. He hired also an army from Ĭş′ra-el to help him in this war; but a prophet said to him, "O king, do not let the army of Ĭş′ra-el go with you against Ē′dom, for the Lord is not with the people of Ĭş′ra-el. But go with your own men, and be strong and brave; and the Lord will help you."

"But how will I get back the money that I have paid to the army of Ĭş′ra-el?" said Ăm-a-zī′ah to the prophet.

"Fear not," said the prophet; "the Lord is able to give you much more than you have lost."

Then Ăm-a-zī′ah obeyed the Lord, and sent back the men of Ĭş′ra-el to their own land, and went against the Ē′dom-ītes with the men of Jū′dah. The Lord gave him a great victory in the land of Ē′dom; Ăm-a-zī′ah was cruel to the people whom he conquered, and killed very many of them in his anger. And when he came back from Ē′dom, he brought with him the idol-gods of that land, and although they could not save their own people, Ăm-a-zī′ah set them up for his own gods, and burned incense to them and bowed down before them. And when a prophet of the Lord came to him, and warned him that God was angry with him, and would surely punish him for this wickedness, Ăm-a-zī′ah said to the prophet, "Who has asked you to give advice to the king? Keep still, or you will be put to death!" And the prophet answered him, "I know that it is God's will that you shall be destroyed, because you will not listen to the word of the Lord."

Ăm-a-zī′ah's punishment was not long delayed, for soon after this, he made war upon Jō′ăsh, the king of Ĭş′ra-el, whose kingdom was far greater and stronger than his own. The two armies met at Bĕth-shē′mesh, northwest of Jė-rụ-să′lĕm. Ăm-a-zī′ah was beaten in a great battle, many of his men were slain, and Ăm-a-zī′ah himself was taken prisoner by Jō′ăsh, the king of Ĭş′ra-el. Jō′ăsh took the city of Jė-rụ′să-lĕm, and broke down the wall, and carried away all the treasures in the palace and in the Temple of the Lord.



ŬZ-ZĪ′AH IS SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY.

After this Ăm-a-zī′ah lived fifteen years, but he never gained the power that he had lost. His nobles made a plan to kill him, and Ăm-a-zī′ah fled away from the city to escape them. But they caught him, and slew him, and brought his body back to Jė-rụ′să-lĕm to be buried in the tombs of the kings. His reign began well, but it ended ill, because he failed to obey the word of the Lord.

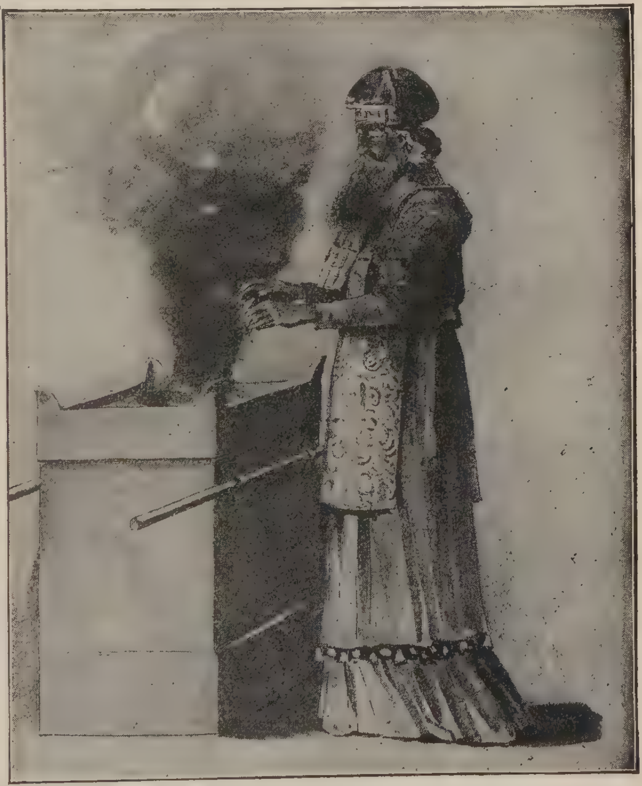
After Ăm-a-zī′ah came his son Ŭz-zī′ah, who was also called Ăz-a-rī′ah. He was the tenth king of Jū′dah. Ŭz-zī′ah was only sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he was king for fifty-two years. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord during most of his reign. Ŭz-zī′ah found the kingdom weak and he made it strong, for the Lord helped him. He won back for Jū′dah the land of the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭneṣ, the land of the Ăm′mon-ītes on the east of Jôr′dan, and of the Ā-rā′bĭ-anṣ on the south. He built cities and made strong walls around them, with towers full of weapons for defence against enemies. He loved the fields, and planted trees and vineyards, and raised crops of wheat and barley.

But when Ŭz-zī′ah was strong and rich his heart became proud, and he no longer tried to do God's will. He sought to have the power of the high-priest as well as that of the king, and he went into the Holy Place in the Temple to offer incense upon the golden altar, which was allowed to the priests only. The high-priest Ăz-a-rī′ah followed Ŭz-zī′ah into the Holy Place with the other priests, and said to him:

"It is not for you to offer incense, O King Ŭz-zī′ah, nor to come into the Holy Place. This belongs to the priests alone. Go out of the Holy Place, for you have disobeyed the Lord's command; and it will not bring upon you honor, but trouble."

Ŭz-zī′ah was standing before the golden altar with a censer of incense in his hand. Instantly the white scales of leprosy rose upon his forehead. The priests saw in that moment that God had smitten Ŭz-zī′ah with leprosy; indeed, he felt it himself, and turned to leave the Holy Place. But they would not wait for him to go out; they drove him out, for the leper's presence made the house unholy. And from that day until he died, Ŭz-zī′ah was a leper. He could no longer sit as king, but his son Jō′tham took his place; nor was he allowed to live in the palace, but he stayed in a house alone. And when he died they would not give him a place among the tombs of the kings; but they buried him in a field outside. Jō′tham, the eleventh king, ruled after his father's death sixteen years. He served the Lord, but he did not stop his people from worshipping the idols. He was warned by his father's fate, and was content to be a king, without trying at the same time to be a priest and to offer incense in the Temple. God was with Jō′tham, and gave his kingdom some success.

The next king, the twelfth, was Ā′hăz, who was the wickedest of all the kings of Jū′dah. He left the service of God, and worshipped the images of Bā′al. Worse than any other king, he even offered some of his own children as burnt-offerings to the false gods. In his reign the house of the Lord was shut up, and its treasures were taken away, and it was left to fall into ruin. For his sins and the sins of his people, God brought great suffering upon the land. The king of Ĭş′ra-el, Pē′kah, came against Ā′hăz, and killed more than a hundred thousand of the men of Jū′dah, among them the king's own son. The Ĭş′ra-el-ītes also took away many more,—men, women and children,—as captives. But a prophet of the Lord in Ĭş′ra-el, whose name was Ō′ded, came out to meet the rulers, and said to them.



THE HIGH-PRIEST OFFERS SACRIFICE IN THE TEMPLE.

"The Lord God was angry with Jū′dah, and gave its people into your hand. But do you now intend to keep your brothers of Jū′dah as slaves? Have not you also sinned against the Lord? Now listen to the word of the Lord, and set your brothers free and send them home."

Then the rulers of Ĭş′ra-el gave clothing to such of the captives as were in need, and set food before them; and they sent them home to their own land, even giving to those that were weak among them asses to ride upon. They brought them to Jĕr′ĭ-chō, in the valley of the Jôr′dan, and gave them to their own people.

When the Ē′dom-ītes came against Jū′dah, King Ā′hăz sent to the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş, a great people far away, to come and help him. The Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş came, but they did not help him, for they made themselves the rulers of Jū′dah, and robbed Ā′hăz of all that he had, and laid heavy burdens upon the land. At last Ā′hăz died, leaving his people worshippers of idols and under the power of the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ.

In the days of these three kings, Ŭz-zī′ah, Jō′tham and Ā′hăz, God raised up a great prophet in Jū′dah, whose name was Ī-şā′iah. The prophecies that he spoke in the name of the Lord are given in the book of Ī-şā′iah. In the year that King Ŭz-zī′ah died, Ī-şā′iah was a young man. One day, while he was worshipping in the Temple, a wonderful vision rose suddenly before his sight. He saw the form of the Lord God upon a throne, with the angels around him. He saw also strange creatures called seraphim, standing before the throne of the Lord. Each of these had six wings. With two wings he covered his face before the glory of the Lord, with two wings he covered his feet, and with two he flew through the air to do God's will. And these seraphim called out to one another, "Holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

And the young Ī-şā′iah felt the walls and the floor of the Temple shaking at these voices; and he saw a cloud of smoke covering the house. Ī-şā′iah was filled with fear. He cried out saying:

"Woe has come to me! for I am a man of sinful lips, and I live among a people of sinful lips: and now my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphim took into his hand the tongs that were used in the sacrifices. He flew to the altar, and with the tongs took up a burning coal. Then he flew to the place where Ī-şā′iah was standing, and pressed the fiery coal to Ī-şā′iah's lips; and he said, "This coal from God's altar has touched your lips, and now your sin is taken away, and you are made clean."

Then Ī-şā′iah heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send to this people? Who will bear the message of the Lord to them?"

And Ī-ş̧ā′iah said, "Here am I, Lord; send me!"

And the Lord said to Ī-ş̧ā′iah, "You shall be my prophet, and shall go to this people, and shall give to them my words. But they will not listen to you, nor understand you. Your words will do them no good, but will seem to make their hearts hard, and their ears heavy, and their eyes shut. For they will not hear with their ears, nor see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor will they turn to me and be saved."

And Ī-ş̧ā′iah said, "How long must this be, O Lord?"

And the Lord said:

"Until the cities are left waste without people, and the houses without men to live in them; and the land shall become utterly desolate; and the people shall be taken far away into another land. But out of all this there shall be a few people, a tenth part, to come back, and to rise like a new tree from the roots where the old tree has been cut down. This tenth part shall be the seed of a new people in the times to come."

By this Ī-ş̧ā′iah knew that, though his words might seem to do no good, yet he was to go on preaching, for long afterward a new Jū′dah should rise out of the ruins of the old kingdom, and should serve the Lord.

Ī-ş̧ā′iah lived for many years, and spoke the word of the Lord to his people until he was a very old man. He preached while four kings, perhaps also a fifth, were ruling. Some of these kings were friendly, and listened to his words: but others were not willing to ŏbey the prophet and do the will of God; and the kingdom of Jū′dah gradually fell away from the worship of the Lord, and followed the people of the Ten Tribes in the worship of idols.

Story Four

THE GOOD KING HEZEKIAH

II Kings xviii : 1, to xxi : 21; II Chronicles xxix : 1, to xxxii : 33; Isaiah xxxv : 1, to xxxviii : 22.

AFTER Ā′hăz, the wickedest of the kings of Jū′dah, came Hĕz-e-kī′ah, who was the best of the kings. He listened to the words of the prophet Ī-şā′iah, and obeyed the commands of the Lord. In the first month of his reign, when he was a young man, he called together the priests and the Lē′vītes, who had the charge of the house of the Lord, and he said to them:

"My sons, give yourselves once more to the service of the Lord, and be holy, as God commands you. Now open the doors of the house of the Lord, which have been shut for these many years; and take out of the house all the idols that have been placed in it; and make the place clean, and pure from all evil things. Because the people have turned away from the Lord, he has been angry with us, and has left us to our enemies; now let us go back to the Lord, and promise again to serve him. God has chosen you, my sons, to lead in his worship; do not neglect the work that the Lord has given you to do."

Then the Temple was opened as of old; the idols were taken away; the altar was made holy to the Lord, and the daily offering was laid upon it; the lamps were lighted in the Holy Place; the priest stood before the golden altar offering incense; the Lē′vītes in their robes sang the psalms of Dā′vid, while the silver trumpets made music; and the people came up to worship in the Temple as they had not come in many years.

You remember that the great Feast of the Passover kept in mind how the children of Ĭş′ra-el had come out of Ē′ġy̆pt. (See Part First, Story Twenty-three.) For a long time the people had ceased to keep this feast, both in Jū′dah and in Ĭş′ra-el. King

Hĕz-e-kī′ah sent commands through all Jū′dah for the people to come up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and to worship the Lord in this feast. He also sent men through the land of Ĭș′ra-el, the Ten Tribes, to ask the men of Ĭș′ra-el also to come up with their brothers of Jū′dah to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and to keep the feast. At that time Hṓ-shē′ȧ, the last king of Ĭș′ra-el, was on the throne, the land was overrun by the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anș, and the kingdom was very weak, and nearing its end. Most of the people in Ĭș′ra-el were worshippers of idols, and had forgotten God's law. They laughed at Hĕz-e-kī′ah's messsengers, and would not come to the feast. But in many places in Ĭș′ra-el there were some who had listened to the prophets of the Lord, and these came up to worship with the men of Jū′dah. For each family they roasted a lamb, and with it ate the unleavened bread, that is, bread made without yeast, and they praised the Lord who had led their fathers out from Ē′ġy̆pt to their own land.

POOL OF HĔZ-E-KĪ′AH AT JĖ-RỤ′SȦ-LĔM.

After the feast, when the people had given themselves once more to the service of God, King Hĕz-e-kī′ah began to destroy the idols that were everywhere in Jū′dah. He sent men to break down the images, to tear in pieces the altars to the false gods, and to cut down the trees under which the altars stood. You remember that Mō′șeș made a serpent of brass in the wilderness. This image had been brought to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and was still kept there in the days of Hĕz-e-kī′ah. The people were worshipping it as an idol; and were burning incense before it. Hĕz-e-kī′ah said, "It is nothing but a piece of brass," and he commanded that it should be broken up. Everywhere he called upon his people to turn from the idols, to destroy them, and to worship the Lord God.

When Hĕz-e-kī′ah became king, the kingdoms of Ĭş′ra-el, and Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, and Jū′dah, with all the lands near them, were under the power of the great kingdom of the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. Each land had its own king, but he ruled under the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ; and every year a heavy tax was laid upon the people, to be paid to the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. After a few years, Hĕz-e-kī′ah thought that he was strong enough to set his kingdom free from the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-an rule. He refused to pay the tax any longer, and gathered an army, and built the walls of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm higher, and made ready for a war with the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. But Sĕn-năch′e-rĭb, the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, came into the land of Jū′dah with a great army, and took all the cities in the west of Jū′dah, and threatened to take Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm also. Then Hĕz-e-kī′ah saw that he had made a mistake. He was not able to fight the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş, the most powerful of all the nations in that part of the world. He sent word to the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, saying:

"I will no more resist your rule; forgive me for the past, and I will pay whatever you ask."

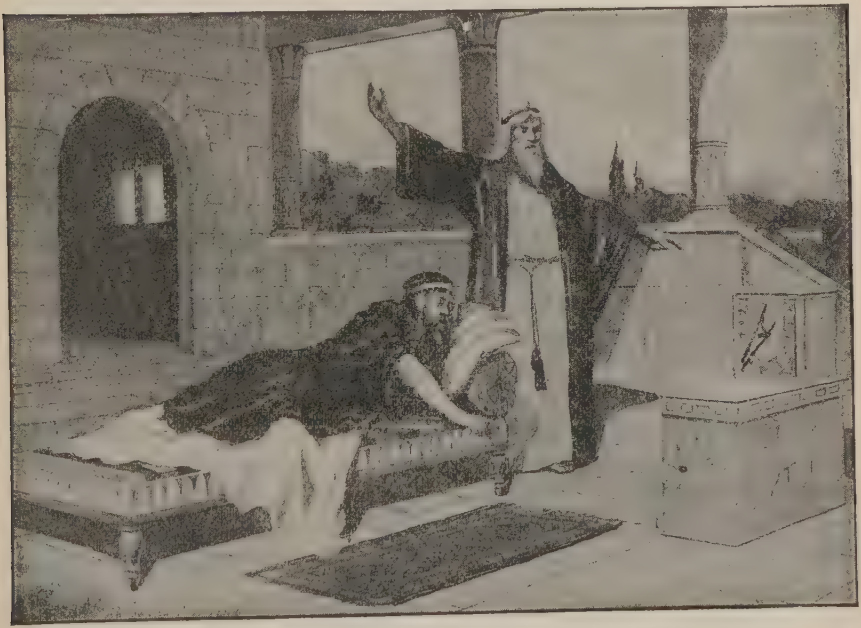
Then the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ laid upon Hĕz-e-kī′ah and his people a tax heavier than before. To obtain the money, Hĕz-e-kī′ah took all the gold and silver in the Temple, all that was in his own palace, and all that he could find among the people, and sent it to the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. But even then the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ was not satisfied. He sent his princes to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm with this message:

"We are going to destroy this city, and to take you away into another land, a land far away; as we have taken the people of Ĭş′ra-el away, and as we have carried captive other peoples. The gods of other nations have not been able to save those who trusted in them against us, and your God will not be able to save you. Now give yourselves up to the great king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, and go to the land where he will send you."

When King Hĕz-e-kī′ah heard this, he was filled with fear. He took the letter into the house of the Lord, and spread it out before the altar, and called upon the Lord to help him and to save his people. Then he sent his princes to the prophet Ī-şā′iah, to ask him to give them some word from the Lord. And Ī-şā′iah said:

"Thus saith the Lord, 'The king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ shall not come to this city, nor shall he shoot an arrow against it. But he shall go back to his own land by the same way that he came. And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. For I will defend this city, and will save it for my own sake and for my servant Dā′vid's sake.'"

Just at that time, Sĕn-năch′e-rĭb, the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, heard that a great army was marching against him from another land. He turned away from the land of Jū′dah, and went to meet these new enemies. And the Lord sent upon the army of the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş a sudden and terrible plague, so that in one night nearly two hundred thousand of them died in their camp. Then King Sĕn-năch′e-rĭb hastened back to his own land, and never again came into the land of Jū′dah; nor did he again send an army there. And years after this, while he was worshipping his idol-god in his temple at Nĭn′e-veh, his chief city, two of his sons came upon him, and slew him with the sword. They escaped into a distant land, and Ē′sar-hăd′don, another of his sons, became king over the lands ruled by the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. Thus did God save his city and his people from



THE SHADOW ON THE DIAL GOES BACK.

their enemies, because they looked to him for help. At the time while the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anș were in the land, and the kingdom was in great danger, King Hĕz-e-kī′ah was suddenly stricken with a deadly disease. It was a tumor or a cancer, which no physician could cure; and the prophet Ī-ṣā′iah said to him:

"Thus saith the Lord, 'Set your house in order, and prepare to leave your kingdom, for you shall die, and not live.'"

But King Hĕz-e-kī′ah felt that in a time of such trouble to the land he could not be spared, especially as at that time he had no son who could take charge of the kingdom. Then Hĕz-e-kī′ah upon his bed prayed to the Lord that he might live; and he said:

"O Lord, I beseech thee, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in thy sight. Let me live and not die, O Lord!"

The Lord heard Hĕz-e-kī′ah's prayer, and before Ī-ṣā′iah had reached the middle of the city, on his way home, the Lord said to him, "Turn again, and say to Hĕz-e-kī′ah the prince of my people, 'Thus saith the Lord, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; I will heal you; and in three days you shall go up to the house of the Lord. I will add to your life fifteen years, and I will save this city from the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ.'"

Then Ī-ṣā′iah the prophet came again to Hĕz-e-kī′ah, and spoke to him the word of the Lord; and he said, also, "Lay on the tumor a plaster made of figs, and he shall be cured."

When Hĕz-e-kī′ah heard the words of Ī-ṣā′iah, he said, "What sign will the Lord give, to show that he will cure me, and that I shall again go up to the house of the Lord?"

And Ī-ṣā′iah said, "The Lord will give you a sign, and you shall choose it yourself. Shall the shadow on the dial go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?" Near the palace was standing a sun-dial, by which the time of the day was shown, for there were no clocks in those years. And Hĕz-e-kī′ah said, "It is easy for the shadow to go forward ten degrees. Let it go back ten degrees."

Then Ī-ṣā′iah the prophet called upon the Lord, and the Lord heard him; and caused the shadow to go backward on the sun-dial ten degrees. And within three days Hĕz-e-kī′ah was well, and went to worship in the house of the Lord. After this Hĕz-e-kī′ah lived fifteen years in honor. When he died all the land mourned for him as the best of the kings.

Story Five

THE LOST BOOK FOUND IN THE TEMPLE

II Kings xxi : 1, to xxiii : 25; II Chronicles xxxiii : 1, to xxxv : 27.

MĀ-NĂS′SĔH, the fourteenth king of Jū′dah, followed the sins of his grandfather Ā′hăz, and not the good deeds of his father Hĕz-e-kī′ah. He was only twelve years old when he began to reign, too young for so great a care as the kingdom; and in his youth he turned away from the teachings of the prophet Ī-şā′iah and from the service of the Lord. He built again the altars to Bā′al and the Ăsh-ē′rah, which his father Hĕz-e-kī′ah had thrown down; he worshipped the sun, and moon, and stars; he set up images even in the Temple, the house of the Lord. When Mȧ-năs′seh grew older, and had children of his own, he made them go through the fire, seeking to please the false gods. He would not listen to the prophets whom the Lord sent to warn him; and there is reason to believe,—though the Bible does not say it,—that he put to death the good prophet Ī-şā′iah.

And Mȧ-năs′seh in his wickedness reigned a long time, longer than any of the wicked kings who had gone before him; so that he led his people further away from God than even Ā′hăz, who had been as wicked as Mȧ′năs-seh. Because of Mȧ-năs′seh's sins, and the sins of his people, the Lord brought upon the land the generals of the Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-an army with their host. They took Mȧ-năs′seh a prisoner and bound him with chains and carried him to the city of Băb′ȳ-lon, where the king of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ was then living. There Mȧ-năs′seh was kept a prisoner for a time.

While he was in prison Mȧ′năs-seh saw how wicked he had been, and he sought the Lord. He prayed to be forgiven for his sins, and the Lord heard him. Afterward, the king of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ allowed Mȧ-năs′seh to rule over his land again. Then Mȧ-năs′seh knew that the Lord was the only true God; and from that time he worshipped the Lord only. He took the altars and the images of the false gods out of the Temple, and built again the altar of the Lord, and caused the offerings to be laid upon it. He commanded his people to worship the Lord, and to leave the idols; but they had gone too far to come back, and only a few of them followed their king's example in seeking the Lord. He could easily lead his people into sin, but he could not bring them back to God.

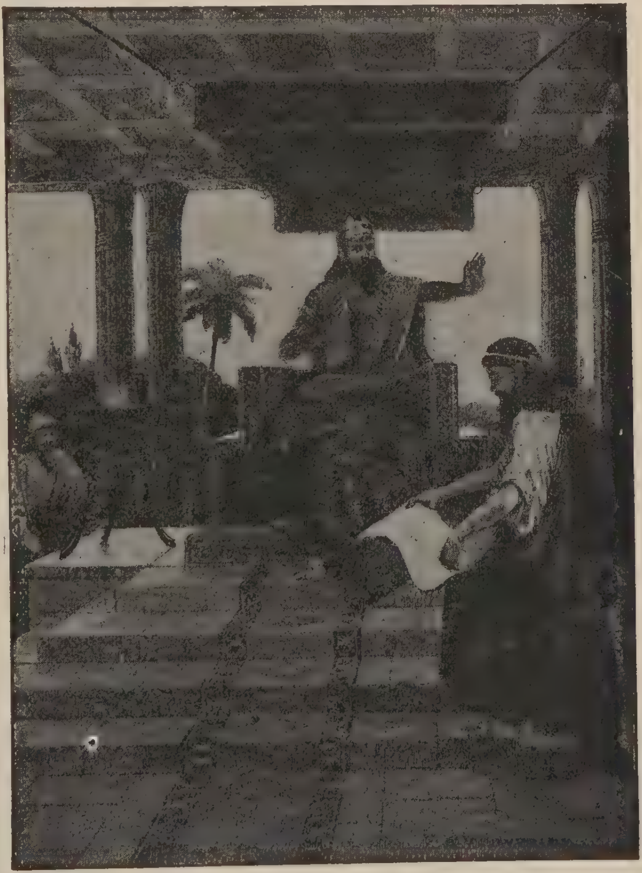
After a long reign of fifty-five years Mȧ-năs′seh died, and his son Ā′mon became king. He reigned only two years, but they were years of wickedness and of worshipping idols. Then his servants in his own house killed Ā′mon; but the people killed them in turn, and made his son Jȯ-sī′ah king.

Jȯ-sī′ah, the sixteenth king, was only eight years old when his father Ā′mon was slain. At first he was too young to rule over the land, and the princes of his court governed in his name. But when Jȯ-sī′ah was sixteen years old he chose the Lord God of his father Dā′vid, the God whom Hĕz-e-kī′ah had worshipped; and he served the Lord more fully than any of the kings who had gone before him. When he was twenty years old, he began to clear away the idols and the idol-temples from the land of Jū′dah. He did his work more thoroughly than it had ever been done before, by Jė-hŏsh′a-phăt or by Hĕz-e-kī′ah; for he left in all the land not a single place where idols were worshipped. He went even beyond his own borders, into the land that had been the land of Ĭş′ra-el, from which most of the people had been carried away captive long before; and in every place he broke down the altars, and burned the images, and even dug up the bones of the idol-priests, and burned them with their images.

He came to Bĕth′=el, twelve miles north of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, where Jĕr-o-bō′am of Ĭş′ra-el had built the temple for the worship of the golden calves, two hundred years before. There, as he was burning the bones of the idol-priests upon the ruins of their own altars, he found a tomb, and asked who was buried there. They said, "This is the tomb of the man of God who came from Jū′dah, and warned King Jĕr-o-bō′am of one who would do these very things that you are doing."

"Let his bones rest," said King Jȯ-sī′ah. "Let no man touch the bones of the prophet."

While the men of King Jȯ-sī′ah were at work in the Temple on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah, taking away the idols, and making the house pure once more, they found an old book, written upon rolls of leather. It was the book of the law of the Lord, given by Mō′şeş, but it had been hidden so long that men had forgotten it. They brought the book, and read from it aloud to the king.



THE WORDS OF THE LAW ARE READ BEFORE THE KING.

And when King Jȯ-sī′ah heard the words of the law, and the warning of the woes that were to come upon the people for disobeying them, the king was filled with alarm. He said to the rulers: "Go and ask of the Lord for me and for all the people. Great is the anger of the Lord against us, because our fathers have disobeyed the words of the Lord written in this book." They sought for a prophet to give them the word of the Lord, and they found a woman named Hŭl′dah, living in Jė-rụ′-sȧ-lĕm, to whom the word of the Lord came. She was called "a prophetess," and they brought to her the message of King Jȯ-sī′ah. And the prophetess Hŭl′dah said to them, "Thus saith the Lord.

the God of Ĭş′ra-el, ‘Go and tell the man who has sent you, Behold, I will bring evil on this place and on the people living in it, because they have forsaken the Lord and have worshipped other gods. My anger will fall upon this city and upon this land. But because King Jō̇-sī′ah has sought the Lord, and has done God's will, and has called upon the Lord, therefore the Lord says that he will hold back his anger against this city and this land as long as Jō̇-sī′ah lives, and he shall go down to his grave before all these evils come upon Jū′dah and Jė̄-ru̥′să̇-lĕm.’”

When Jō̇-sī′ah heard this he called all the princes and the priests and the people to meet in the Temple of the Lord. There the king stood by a pillar and read to all the people the words of the book that had been found. Then the king and all his people made a promise to serve the Lord and to do his will, and to keep his law with all their hearts. And this promise they kept while Jō̇-sī′ah lived; but that was only a few years.

All this time the kingdom of Jū′dah, like all the kingdoms around, was a part of the greater kingdom or empire of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. But the great kings of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ had passed away, and now the kingdom or empire of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ was becoming weak and falling apart. Phā′raōh=nē′choh, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt, went to war with the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş, and on his way passed through the land of Jū′dah and what had once been Ĭş′ra-el before its people were carried away captive. Jō̇-sī′ah thought that as the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ was his over-lord, he must fight against the king of Ē′ġy̆pt, who was coming against him.

Phā′raōh=nē′choh, the king of Ē′ġy̆pt, sent a message to King Jō̇-sī′ah, saying, “I have nothing against you, O, king of Jū′dah, and I am not coming to make war on you, but on the king of Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ. God has sent me, and commanded me to make haste. Do not stand in my way, or you may be destroyed.”

But Jō̇-sī′ah would not heed the message of the king of Ē′ġy̆pt. He went out against him with his army, and met him in battle on the great plain of Ĕs-dra-ē′lon, where so many battles had been fought before and have been fought since. There the Ē̇-ġy̆p′tianş won a victory, and in the fight the archers shot King Jō̇-sī′ah. He died in his chariot, and they brought his dead body to Jė̄-ru̥′să̇-lĕm. And all the land mourned and wept for the king whom they loved because he had ruled wisely and well. And with the good King Jō̇-sī′ah died the last hope of the kingdom of Jū′dah.

Story Six

THE LAST FOUR KINGS OF JUDAH, AND THE WEEPING PROPHET

II Kings xxiii : 31, to xxv : 22; II Chronicles xxxvi : 1 to 21; Jeremiah xxii : 10 to 12; xxiv : 1 to 10; xxix : 1 to 29; xxxvi : 1, to xliii : 13.

WHEN the good King Jȯ-sī′ah fell in battle the people of the land made his son Jė-hō′a-hăz king. At that time all the kingdoms around Jū′dah were in confusion. The great empire of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ had been the ruler of nearly all that part of the world; but now it had been broken up, Nĭn′e-veh, its chief city, had been destroyed and Ē′ġȳpt, Băb-ȳ-lō′nĭ-a, and other lands were at war, each striving to take the place of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ as the ruler of the nations.

Phā′raōh=nē′choh, the king of Ē′ġȳpt, whose warriors had slain King Jȯ-sī′ah, became for a time the master of the lands between Ē′ġȳpt and the Eū-phrā′tēş river. He felt that he could not trust the young King Jė-hō′a-hăz, and he took his crown from him, and carried him a captive down to Ē′ġȳpt, so that Jė-hō′a-hăz, the seventeenth king, reigned only three months. The prophet Jĕr-e-mī′ah, who arose during Jȯ-sī′ah's reign, spoke thus of the young king who so soon was taken away a prisoner, "Weep not for the dead King Jȯ-sī′ah, nor sorrow over him, but weep for him that goeth away, the King Jė-hō′a-hăz, for he shall return no more, nor shall he again see his own land. In the place where they have led him captive, there shall he die, and he shall look upon this land no more."

The man whom Phā′raōh=nē′choh set up as king over Jū′dah in place of Jė-hō′a-hăz was his brother Jė-hoi′a-kĭm, another son of Jȯ-sī′ah. But he was not like his father, for he lived most wickedly, and led his people back to the idols which Jȯ-sī′ah had tried to destroy. Jĕr-e-mī′ah, the prophet, spoke to him the words of the Lord, and warned him that the evil way in which he was going would surely end in ruin to the king and the people. This made King Jė-hoi′a-kĭm very angry. He tried to kill the prophet, and to save his life Jĕr-e-mī′ah was hidden by his friends.

Jĕr-e-mī′ah could no longer go out among the people nor stand in the Temple to speak the word of the Lord. So he wrote upon a roll God's message, and gave it to his friend Bā′ruch to read before the people. While Bā′ruch was reading it some officers of the king came and took the roll away, and brought it to the king. King Jė-hoi′a-kĭm was sitting in his palace, with the princes around him, and a fire was burning before him, for it was the winter time. The officer began to read the roll before the king and the princes, but when he had read a few pages the king took up a knife and began cutting the leaves and throwing them into the fire. Even the princes were shocked at this, for they knew that the writing on the roll was God's word to the king and the people. They begged the king not to destroy the roll, but he would not heed them. He went on cutting up the roll and throwing it in the fire until it was all burned.

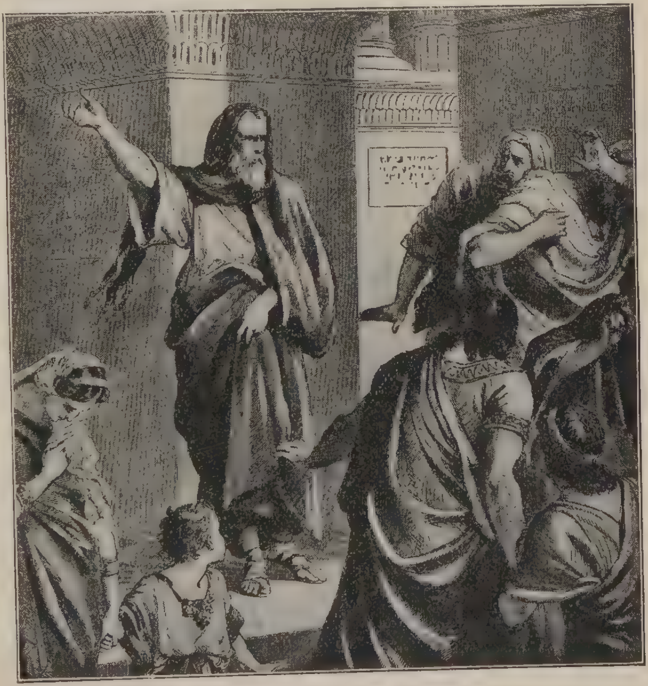
The king told his officers to take Jĕr-e-mī′ah the prophet and Bā′ruch, who read his words; and he would have killed them if he had found them. But they were hidden, and he could not find them, for the Lord kept them in safety.

Jė-hoi′a-kĭm reigned a few years as the servant of the king of Ē′ġy̆pt. But soon the Ė-ġy̆p′tianş lost all the lands that they had gained outside of their own country; and the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-anş, under Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, rose to power over the nations, and took the place of empire that had been held by the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-anş. Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar was the son of the king of Băb′y̆-lon, and at first was the general of his army. He came against Jū′dah and Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm, but Jė-hoi′a-kĭm did not dare to fight with him. He promised to serve Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, and on that condition was allowed to remain king; but no sooner had the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-an army gone away than he broke his promise, and rose against Băb-y̆′lon, and tried to make himself free.

But in this King Jė-hoi′a-kĭm did not succeed. Instead, he lost his kingdom and his life, for either by the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-anş or by his own people he was slain, and his dead body, like that of a beast, was thrown outside the gate of the city. He had reigned in wickedness eleven years, and he died in disgrace.

Jė-hoi′a-kĭm's young son Jė-hoi′a-chĭn, who was also called

Cȯ-nī′ah or Jĕc-o-nī′ah, was then made king by the people. But he reigned only three months, for Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, who was now the king of Băb′ỹ-lon, and was conquering all the lands, came with his army and took the city of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. He carried the young king a captive to Băb′ỹ-lon, as Nē′choh had carried Jė-hō′a-hăz a captive to Ē′ġy̆pt eleven years before. With King Jė-hoi′a-chĭn were taken away many of the nobles and rulers, and the best people of the land. Most of these were worshippers of the Lord, who carried with them to the land of Băb-ỹ-lō′ni-ȧ a love for the Lord, and who served him there, for their trouble only drew them the closer to their God. After these captives had been taken away the Lord showed to Jĕr-e-mī′ah in the Temple a vision of what should come to pass. Jĕr-e-mī′ah saw two baskets of figs. One basket was full of fresh, ripe figs, the best that could be found. The other basket was full of poor, decayed figs, not fit to be eaten. The Lord said, "Jĕr-e-mī′ah, what do you see?"



JĔR-E-MĪ′AH WARNS THE PEOPLE OF JŪ′DAH.

And Jĕr-e-mī′ah said, "Figs; the good figs very good; and the bad figs very bad, figs so bad that they cannot be eaten."

Then the Lord said to Jĕr-e-mī′ah, "Like these good figs are the captives who have been taken away to the land of Băb′ỹ-lon. I will care for them, and keep them, and will bring them again to this land. I will give them a heart to know me; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the bad figs are like those who are left in this land, the king who shall reign over them, and his princes, and his people. They shall suffer, and shall die by the sword, and by famine, and by plague, until they are destroyed."

God showed Jĕr-e-mī′ah in this way that the captives in Băb′ȳ-lon were the hope of the nation. And afterward Jĕr-e-mī′ah sent a letter to these captives, saying, "Thus saith the Lord to those who have been carried away captive, 'Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; and have sons and daughters, and let your children be married in that land when they grow up. And pray the Lord to give peace to the city and the land where you are living, for you and your children shall stay there seventy years, and after seventy years they shall come again to their own land in peace. For my thoughts, saith the Lord, are thoughts of peace and kindness toward you. You shall call upon me, and I will hear you. You shall seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.'"

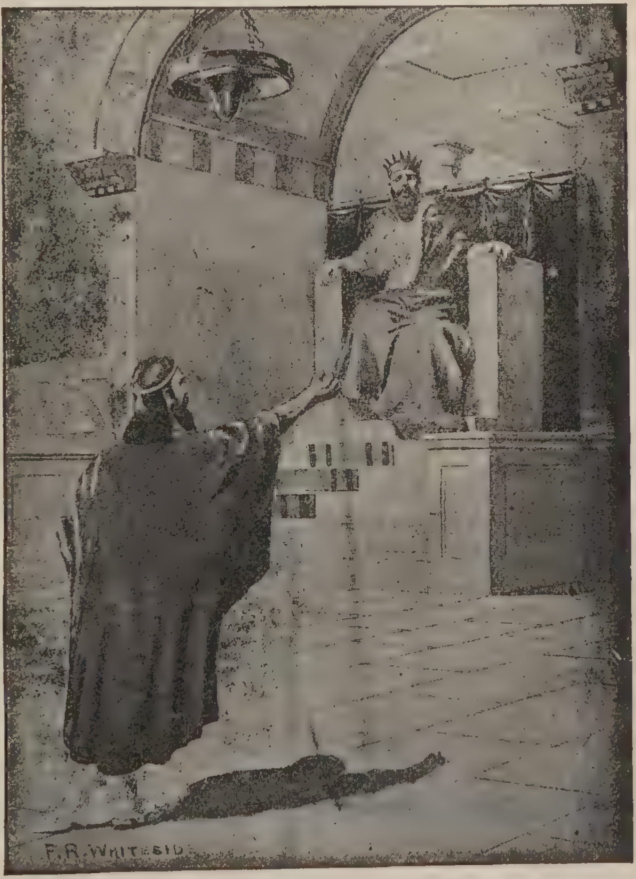
After Jė-hoi′a-chĭn and the captives had been taken away, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar set up as king in Jū′dah Zĕd-e-kī′ah, the uncle of Jė-hoi′a-chĭn and another son of Jō-sī′ah. He was the twentieth and last king of the kingdom of Jū′dah. He began by promising to be true and faithful to his over-lord, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, the king of Băb′ȳ-lon, who had made him king. But very soon he was led by the nobles who stood around his throne to break his promise and to throw off the rule of Băb′ȳ-lon; also he left the worship of the Lord, as did his people, and began to pray to the idols of wood and stone that could give him no help.

Jĕr-e-mī′ah the prophet told King Zĕd-e-kī′ah that he was doing wickedly in breaking his promises and in turning from the Lord to idols. He told Zĕd-e-kī′ah that he would fail, and would bring his kingdom to ruin. He said, "It is better to obey the king of Băb′ȳ-lon than to fight against him, for God will not bless you and your people in breaking your word. The king of Băb′ȳ-lon will come and will destroy this city. You shall see him face to face, and he will take you away a captive to his own land, and this city shall be destroyed."

This made the princes and nobles very angry against Jĕr-e-mī′ah. They said, "This man Jĕr-e-mī′ah is an enemy of his land

and a friend to the king of Băb′ȳ-lon. He is a traitor, and should be put to death." Zĕd-e-kī′ah said to his nobles, "Jĕr-e-mī′ah is in your hands; you can do with him what you choose. The king cannot help him against you."

Then these men seized Jĕr-e-mī′ah, and took him to the prison, and threw him into a dungeon, down below the floor, and filled with mud and filth, into which the prophet sank; and there they left him to die. But in the court of the king there was one kind man, a negro named Ē′bed-mē′lech. He found Jĕr-e-mī′ah in the dungeon, and let down to him a rope and drew him up, and brought him to a safe and dry place, though still in the prison.



JĔR-E-MĪ′AH TELLS THE KING HE SHALL BE TAKEN CAPTIVE.

By this time Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, the king of Băb′ȳ-lon, and his army were again before the city of Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm, laying siege to it. No one could go out or come in; no food could be found for the people, and many of them starved to death. The soldiers of Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar built forts, and threw darts and stones, and broke down the gates, and made great openings in the walls of the city.

When King Zĕd-e-kī′ah saw that the city must fall before its enemies he tried to escape. But the men of Băb′ȳ-lon followed him and took him prisoner, and with him all his family, his wives and his sons. They were all brought before King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, so that it came to pass as the prophet had said, Zĕd-e-kī′ah saw the king of Băb-ȳ′lon.

But he saw what was more terrible; he saw all his sons slain before him. Then Zĕd-e-kī′ah's eyes were put out, and, a blinded captive, he was dragged away to Băb′ȳ-lon. The Băb-ȳ-lō′ni-an soldiers killed all the leaders of the people who had led Zĕd-e-kī′ah to rebel against Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar; and the rest of the people, except the very poorest in the land, they took away to the land of Băb′ȳ-lon. The king of Băb′ȳ-lon was friendly to Jĕr-e-mī′ah, the prophet, because of the advice that he had given to Zĕd-e-kī′ah and his people. The ruler whom Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar set over the city opened the door of Jĕr-e-mī′ah's prison, and allowed him to choose between going to Băb′ȳ-lon with the captives or staying with the poor people in the land. Jĕr-e-mī′ah chose to stay; but not long after he was taken down to Ē′ġȳpt by enemies to the king of Băb′ȳ-lon. And there in Ē′ġȳpt Jĕr-e-mī′ah died; some think that he was slain. His life had been sad, for he had seen nothing but evil come upon his land; and his message from the Lord had been a message of woe and wrath. Because of his sorrow, Jĕr-e-mī′ah has been called "the weeping prophet."

Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar carried away all that was left of the valuable things in the Temple, and then he burned the buildings. He tore down the walls of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and set the city on fire. So all that was left of the city of Dā′vid and the Temple of Sŏl′o-mon was a heap of ashes and blackened stones. And thus the kingdom of Jū′dah ended, nearly four hundred years after Rē-ho-bō′am became its first king.

Story Seven

WHAT EZEKIEL SAW IN THE VALLEY

Ezekiel xxxvii.

ALL that was now left of the people of Jū′dah was a company of captives, carried away from their own land to the land of Băb′y̆-lon. Theirs was a long, sorrowful journey, with their wives and children, dragged by cruel soldiers over mountains and valleys almost a thousand miles. They could not go straight across the vast desert which lies between the land of Jū′dah and the plains of Băb-y̆-lō′ni-a. They were led around this desert far to the north, through Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, up to the Eū-phrā′tēş river, and then following the great river in all its windings down to the land of their captivity. There in the land of Băb-y̆-lō′ni-a or Chăl-dē′ȧ they found rest at last.

When they were once in their new home the captives met with less trouble than they had feared; for the people of the land under Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, the great king, treated them kindly, and gave them fields to work in as their own. The soil was rich, and they could raise large crops of wheat, and barley, and other grains. They planted gardens and built for themselves houses. Some of them went to live in the cities, and became rich, and some were in the court of King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, and rose to high place as nobles and princes, standing next to the king in rank and honor.

And the best of all was that these captives in a strange land did not worship idols. They saw the images of the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-an gods all around them, but they did not bow down to them. They worshipped the Lord God of their fathers, and the Lord only. The idol-worshippers in Jū′dah had been slain, and most of the captives were good men and women, who taught their children to love and serve the Lord.

And these people did not forget the land from which they had come. They loved the land of Ĭş′ra-el, and they taught their children to love it by singing songs about it. Some of these songs which the captive Jews sang in the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ are in the Book of Psalms. Here is a part of one of these songs:

"By the rivers of Băb′y̆-lon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zī′ŏn.
Upon the willow-trees in the midst of that land
We hanged up our harps.

For there they that led us captive asked us to sing;
And they that wanted us asked us to be glad, saying,
'Sing us one of the songs of Zī′ŏn.'
How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a foreign land?

If I forget thee, O Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm,
Let my right hand forget her skill.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I do not remember thee,
If I do not prefer Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm
Above my chief joy."

From this time these people were called Jews, a name which means "people of Jū′dah." And the Jews everywhere in the world belong to this people, for they have sprung or descended from the men who once lived in the land of Jū′dah. And because they had once belonged to the twelve tribes of Ĭs′ra-el, and ten of the tribes had been lost, and their kingdom had forever passed away, they were also spoken of as Ĭs′ra-el-ītes. So from this time "people of Jū′dah," Jews, and Ĭs′ra-el-ītes, all mean the people who had come from the land of Jū′dah, and their descendants after them.

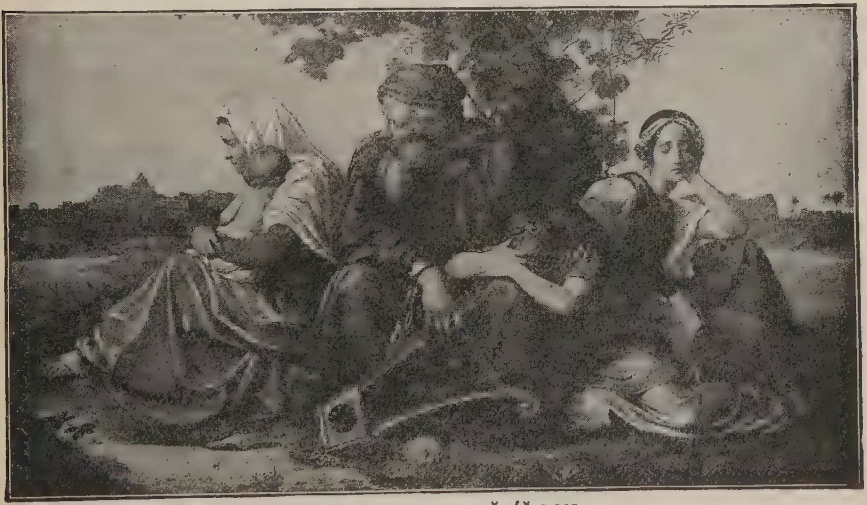
God was good to his people in the land of Băb′y̆-lon, or Chăl-dē′ȧ, another name by which this country was called. He sent to them prophets, who showed to them the way of the Lord. One of these prophets was Dăn′iel, a young man who lived in the court of King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar. Another was a priest named Ė-zē′kĭ-el, who lived among the captive people beside a river in Chăl-dē′ȧ, called the river Chē′bär. God gave to Ė-zē′kĭ-el wonderful visions. He saw the throne of the Lord, and the strange creatures with six wings, that the prophet Ī-şā′iah had seen long before. (See Story Three in this Part.) And he heard the voice of the Lord telling him of what should come to his people in the years to come.

At one time the Lord lifted up Ė-zē′kĭ-el and brought him into the middle of a great valley. The prophet looked around, and saw that the valley was covered with the bones of men, as though a great battle had been fought upon it, and the bodies of the slain had been left there, and they had become a vast army of dry bones.

"Son of man," spoke the voice of the Lord to Ē-zē′kĭ-el, "can these dry bones live again?"

And Ē-zē′kĭ-el answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest whether these dry bones can live."

Then the Lord said to Ē-zē′kĭ-el, "Preach to these dry bones, O son of man, and say to them, 'O ye dry bones, hear the voice of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, I will send breath into you, and you shall live, and I will put flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and you shall be alive again, and know that I am the Lord.'"



THE CAPTIVES IN BĂB′Ȳ-LON.

Then Ē-zē′kĭ-el spoke to the army of dry bones spread over the valley, as the Lord bade him speak. And while he was speaking there sounded a noise of rolling thunder, and all through the field the different bones began to come together, one part to another part, until there were no more loose bones,but skeletons of bones fitted together. Then another change came. Suddenly the flesh grew over all the bones, and they lay on the ground like an army of dead men, a host of bodies without life.

Then the Lord said to Ē̇-zē′kĭ-el, "Speak to the wind, O son of man; speak, and say, 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.'"

Then Ē̇-zē′kĭ-el called upon the wind to come, and while he was speaking the dead bodies began to breathe. Then they stood up on their feet, a great army of living men, filling the whole valley. Then the Lord said to Ē̇-zē′kĭ-el, "Son of man, these dry bones are the people of Ĭş′ra-el. They seem to be lost, and dead, and without hope. But they shall live again, for I, the Lord, will put life into them; and they shall go back to their own land, and be a people once more. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it."

When Ē̇-zē′kĭ-el told the captive people this vision their hearts were lifted up with a new hope that they should see their own land again.

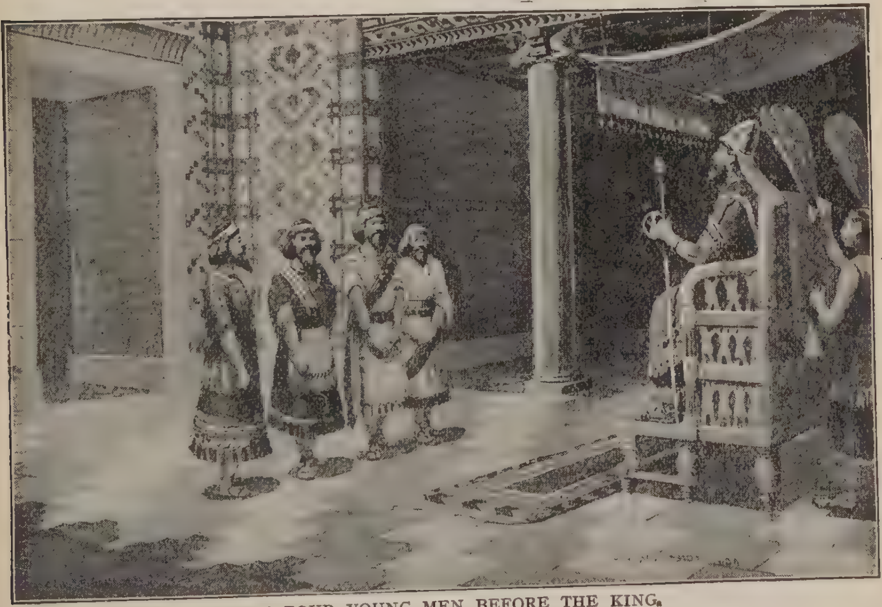
Story Eight

THE JEWISH CAPTIVES IN THE COURT OF THE KING

Daniel i : 1, to ii : 49.

IN the Book of Chronicles, we read of Jė-hoi′a-kĭm, the wicked son of the good King Jŏ-sī′ah. While Jė-hoi′a-kĭm was ruling over the land of Jū′dah, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, the great conqueror of the nations, came from Băb′ȳ-lon with his army of Chăl-dē′an soldiers. He took the city of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and made Jė-hoi′a-kĭm promise to submit to him as his master, a promise that Jė-hoi′a-kĭm soon broke. And when Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar went back to his own land he took with him all the gold and silver that he could find in the Temple; and he carried away as captives very many of the princes and nobles, the best people in the land of Jū′dah.

When these Jewş were brought to the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ or Băb′ȳ-lon, King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar gave orders to the prince who had charge of his palace to choose among these Jewish captives some young men that were of noble rank, and beautiful in their looks, and also quick and bright in their minds, young men who would be able to learn readily. These young men were to be placed under the care of wise men, who should teach them all that they knew, and fit them to stand before the king of Băb′ȳ-lon, so that they might be his helpers, to carry out his orders; and the king wished them to be wise, so that they might give advice in ruling the people.



THE FOUR YOUNG MEN BEFORE THE KING.

Among the young men thus chosen were four Jewş, men who had been brought from Jū′dah. By order of the king the names of these men were changed. One of them, named Dăn′iel, was to be called Bĕl-te-shăz′zar, the other three young men were called Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā-bĕd′-ne-gō. These four young men were taught in all the knowledge of the Chăl-dē′anş; and after three years of training they were taken into the king's palace to stand before the king.

After they came to the palace the chief of the princes in the palace sent to these men as a special honor some of the dishes of food from the king's table, and some of the wine that was set apart for the king and his princes to drink. But both the meat and the wine of the king's table had been a part of the offerings to the idols of wood and stone that were worshipped by the Chăl-dē'anş. These young Jewş felt that if they should take such food they, too, would be worshipping idols. Then, too, the laws of the Jewş were very strict with regard to what kind of food might be eaten, and how it should be cooked. Food of certain kinds was called "unclean," and the Jewş were forbidden to touch it.

These young Jewş, far away from their own land and from their Temple, felt that they must be very careful to do nothing forbidden by the laws which God had given to their people. They said to the chief of the nobles in the palace:

"We cannot eat this meat and drink this wine, for it is forbidden by our laws."

The chief of the nobles said to Dăn'iel:

"If you do not eat the food that is given you, the king will see that you are not looking well. He will be angry with me for not giving you better care. What shall I do? I am afraid that the king may command me to be put to death."

Dăn'iel said:

"Give us vegetable food, and bread. Let us eat no meat, and drink no wine for ten days; and see if we do not look well-fed."

The chief of the nobles, to whose care these young men had been given, loved Dăn'iel; as every one loved him who knew him. So he did as Dăn'iel asked. He took away the meat and the wine, and gave to these young Jewş only vegetables and bread. At the end of ten days the four young men were brought into the room where the great King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz'zar sat; and they bowed low before him. King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz'zar was pleased with these four young men, more than with any others who stood before him. He found them wise, and faithful in the work given to them, and able to rule over men under them. And these four men came to the highest places in the kingdom of the Chăl'dē-anş.

And Dăn'iel, one of these men, was more than a wise man. He was a prophet, like Ê-lī'jah and Ê-lī'shȧ, and Jĕr-e-mī'ah. God gave him to know many things that were coming to pass; and when God sent to any man a dream that had a deep meaning, like Jō'şeph in Story Sixteen of Part First, Dăn′iel could tell what was the meaning of the dream.

At one time King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar dreamed a dream which troubled him greatly. When he awakened he knew that the dream had some deep meaning, but in the morning he had forgotten what the dream was. He sent for the wise men who had in times past given him the meaning of his dreams, and said to them:

"O ye wise men, I have dreamed a wonderful dream; but I have forgotten it. Now tell me what my dream was, and then tell me what it means; for I am sure that it has a meaning."

The wise men said:

"O king, may you live forever! If you will tell us your dream, we will tell you its meaning. But we have no power to tell both the dream and also its meaning. That only the gods can know."

The king became very angry, for these men had claimed that their gods gave them all knowledge. He said:

"Tell me the dream, and its meaning; and I will give you rich reward and high honor. But if you cannot tell, I shall know that you are liars, and you shall be put to death."

The wise men could not do what the king asked; and in great fury he gave command that all of them should be slain. Among these men were Dăn′iel and his three friends, Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ȧ-bĕd′-ne-gō; and these four Jewş were to be slain with the rest of the wise men. Dăn′iel said to the chief captain, who had been sent to kill the wise men:

"Give me a little time; and I will call upon my God. I know that he will help me to tell to the king his dream and its meaning."

So time was given; and Dăn′iel and his three friends prayed to the Lord God. That night the Lord gave to Dăn′iel the secret of the king's dream and its meaning. Then Dăn′iel gave praise and thanks to the Lord; and in the morning he said to the king's captain:

"Do not kill the wise men. Take me before the king, and I will show him his dream and its meaning."

Then in haste Dăn′iel was brought before King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar. The king said to him;:

"Are you able to tell me the dream that I dreamed and the meaning of it?"

Dăn′iel answered:

"The wise men of Băb′ȳ-lon, who look to their idol-gods, cannot tell the king his dream. But there is a God in heaven who knows all things; and he has given me his servant to know your dream and the meaning of it. This is the dream, O king. You saw a great image, tall and noble-looking. The head of this image was of gold, his breast and his arms were of silver, his waist and his hips of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet and toes were of iron and clay mixed together. And while this great image was standing, you saw a stone cut out without hands; and the stone rolled and dashed against the feet of the image; and the whole image fell down; and was broken in pieces; and was crushed and ground into a powder so fine that the wind blew it away like chaff. And you saw the stone that struck the image grow until it became a mountain, and it filled the whole world. This was your dream, O king."

And Dăn′iel went on, and said:

"And this, O king, is the meaning of the dream. God has shown to you what shall come to pass in the years that are to be. You are that head of gold, O king; for that head means your kingdom that now is. After your kingdom has passed away, another kingdom shall take its place; the shoulders and arms of silver. That kingdom shall be followed by another,—the waist and hips of brass; and after that shall come one more kingdom, that of iron. But as you saw a stone cut out without hands; so while the last of these kingdoms shall be standing, the Lord God of heaven shall set up his kingdom. And God's kingdom like that stone, shall be small at first, but it shall break down and destroy all those kingdoms. They shall pass away and perish before it. And as you saw the stone grow into a mountain, so God's kingdom shall become great, and shall rule all the lands. And that kingdom of God shall never pass away, but shall last forever."

When King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar heard this he was filled with wonder. He bowed down before Dăn′iel, and worshipped him, as though Dăn′iel were a god. Then he gave to him great presents, and made him ruler over the part of his kingdom where the city of Băb′y̆-lon was standing. He gave to Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā-bĕd′-nē-gō, Dăn′iel's friends, high offices; but Dăn′iel himself he kept in his palace, to be near him all the time.

Story Nine

THE GOLDEN IMAGE AND THE FIERY FURNACE

Daniel iii : 1 to 30.

AT one time King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar caused a great image to be made and to be covered with gold. This image he set up as an idol to be worshipped, on the plain of Dụ′rȧ, near the city of Băb′y̆-lon. When it was finished, it stood upon its base or foundation almost a hundred feet high, so that upon the plain it could be seen far away. Then the king sent out a command for all the princes, and rulers, and nobles in the land to come to a great gathering, when the image was to be set apart for worship.

The great men of the kingdom came from far and near, and stood around the image. Among them, by command of the king, were Dăn′iel's three friends, the young Jewṣ, Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā̍-bĕd′=ne-gō. For some reason Dăn′iel himself was not there. He may have been busy with the work of the kingdom in some other place.

At one moment in the service before the image all the trumpets sounded, the drums were beaten, and music was made upon musical instruments of all kinds, as a signal for all the people to kneel down and worship the great golden image. But while the people were kneeling there were three men who stood up and would not bow down. These were the three young Jewṣ, Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā̍-bĕd′=ne-gō. They knelt down before the Lord God only.

Many of the nobles had been jealous of these young men because they had been lifted to high places in the rule of the kingdom, and these men, who hated Dăn′iel and his friends, were glad to find that these three men had not obeyed the command of King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar. The king had said that if any one did not worship the golden image he should be thrown into a furnace of fire.

These men who hated the Jews came to the king, and said, "O king, may you live forever! You gave orders that when the music sounded every one should bow down and worship the golden image; and that if any man did not worship he should be thrown into a furnace of fire. There are some Jews whom you have made rulers in the land, and they have not done as you commanded. Their names are Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā-bĕd′-ne-gō. They do not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you have set up."

Then Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar was filled with rage and fury at knowing that any one should dare to disobey his words. He sent for these three men, and said to them, "O Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and Ā-bĕd′-ne-gō, was it by purpose that you did not fall down and worship the image of gold? The music shall sound once more, and if you then will worship the image, it shall be well. But if you will not, then you shall be thrown into the furnace of fire to die."

These three young men were not afraid of the king. They said, "O King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, we are ready to answer you at once. The God whom we serve is able to save us from the fiery furnace and we know that he will save us. But if it is God's will that we should die, even then, you may understand, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you have set up."

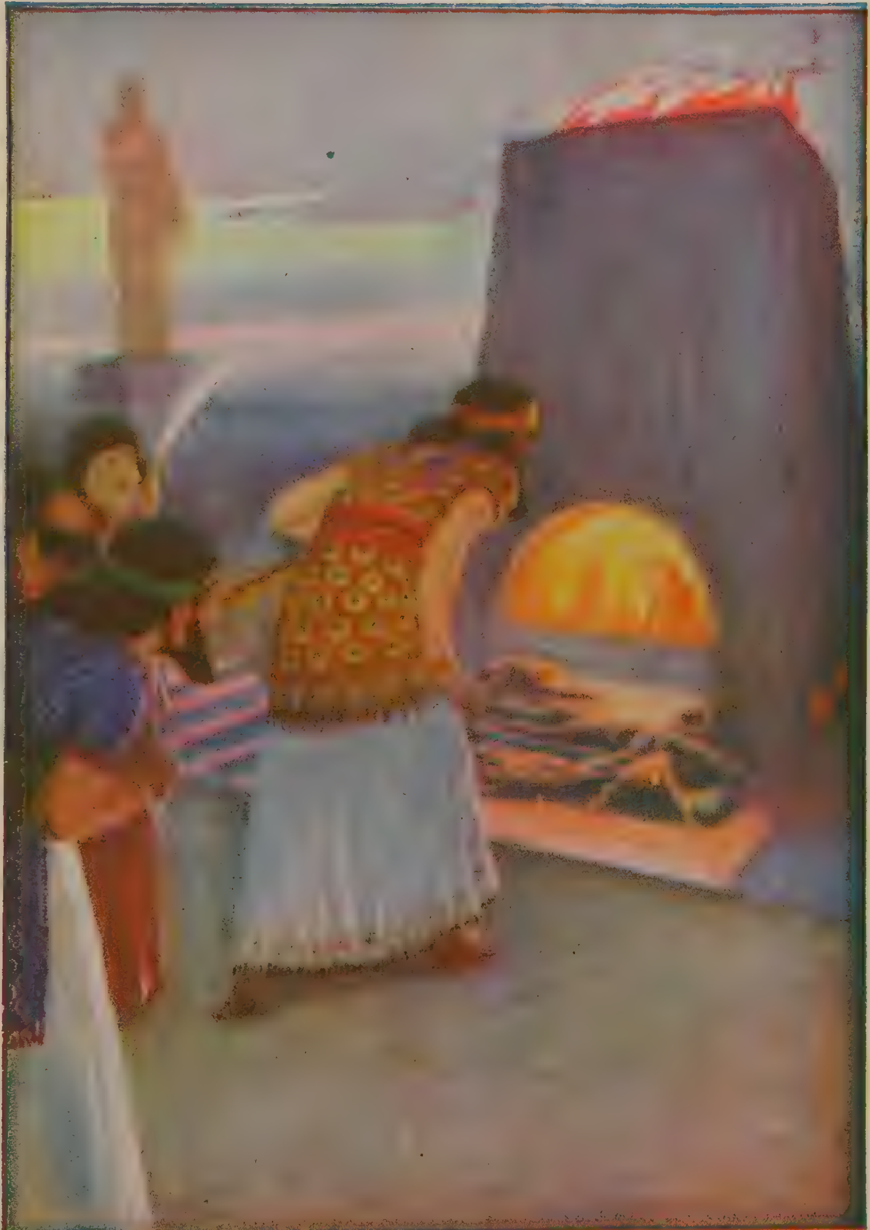
This answer made the king more furious then before. He said to his servants, "Make a fire in the furnace hotter than ever it has been before, as hot as fire can be made, and throw these three men into it."

Then the soldiers of the king's army seized the three young Jews as they stood in their loose robes, with their turbans or hats on their heads. They tied them with ropes, and dragged them to the mouth of the furnace, and threw them into the fire. The flames rushed from the open door with such fury that they burned even to death the soldiers who were holding these men; and the men themselves fell down bound into the middle of the fiery furnace.

King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar stood in front of the furnace, and looked into the open door. As he looked he was filled with wonder at what he saw; and he said to the nobles around him:

"Did we not throw three men bound into the fire? How is it then that I see four men loose, walking in the furnace, and the fourth man looks as though he were a son of the gods?"

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

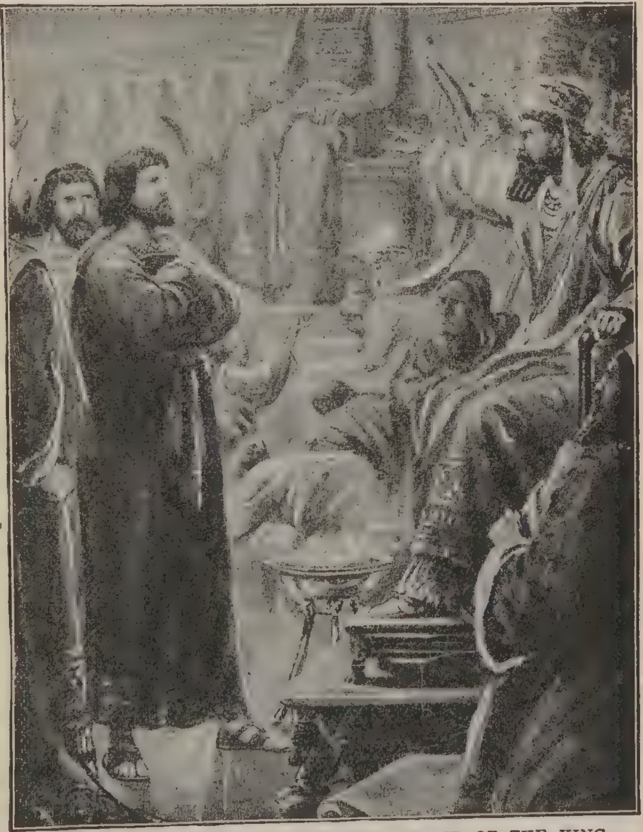


KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR LOOKING INTO THE FIERY FURNACE

The king came near to the door of the furnace as the fire became lower, and he called out to the three men within it:

"Shā′drach, Mē′shach, and A-bĕd′-ne-gō, ye who serve the Most High God, come out of the fire and come to me."

They came out and stood before the king, in the sight of all the princes, and nobles, and rulers; and every one could see that they were alive. Their garments had not been scorched nor their hair singed, nor was there even the smell of fire upon them. The king, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, said before all his rulers:



THE THREE YOUNG JEWS WERE NOT AFRAID OF THE KING.

"Blessed be the God of these men, who has sent his angel and has saved their lives. I make a law that no man in all my kingdoms shall say a word against their God, for there is no other god who can save in this manner. And if any man speaks a word against their God, the Most High God, that man shall be cut in pieces, and his house shall be torn down." And after this the king lifted up these three young men to still higher places in the land of Băb′ȳ-lon.

Story Ten

THE TREE THAT WAS CUT DOWN AND GREW AGAIN.

Daniel iv : 1 to 37.

THIS is the story that King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar himself told to all the people in his great kingdom, of a strange dream that came to him, the meaning of the dream, as it was given by Dăn′iel, and how the dream came true. He said, “Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar the king sends this message to all the people, and nations, that live in all the world. May peace be given to you! It has seemed good to me to show you the signs and wonders that the Most High God has sent to me. How great are God's works! How mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is without end, and his rule is from age to age forever!

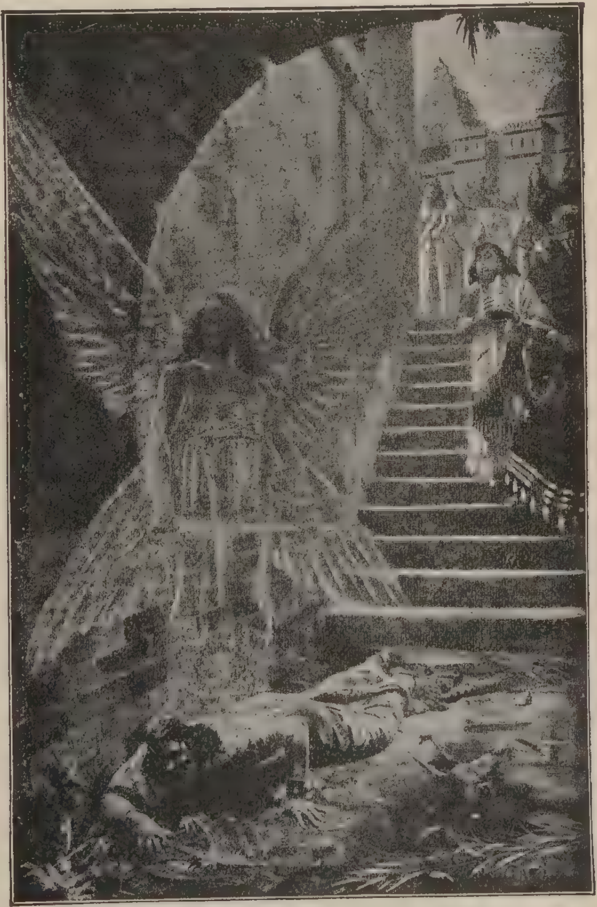
“I, King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, was at rest in my house, and was living at peace in my palace. One night a dream came to me which made me afraid, and my thoughts and my visions made me troubled in heart. I sent for all the wise men of Băb′ȳ-lon to come before me, and to tell me the meaning of my dream. But they did not tell me what the meaning was because they could not. At last came Dăn′iel, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and to him I said:

“‘O Dăn′iel, master of the wise men, I know that in you is the spirit of the holy gods, and that no secret is hidden from you; now tell me what is the meaning of the dream that has come to me. This was the dream:

“‘I saw a tree standing upon the earth. It grew until the top of it reached up to heaven; and it was so great that it could be seen over all the earth. The leaves of it were beautiful, and its fruit was in plenty, and gave food for all. The beasts in the field stood in its shadow, and the birds of the heaven lived on its branches, and many people ate of its fruit.

"'I saw in my dream that a Holy One came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said:

"'"Hew down the tree, and cut off its branches, shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get away from beneath it, and let the birds fly from its branches. But leave the stump of the tree with its roots in the ground, with a band of iron and of brass around it, and the grass of the field growing about it. Let the stump be wet with the dew from heaven, and let it be among the beasts eating the grass of the field. And let seven years pass over it; that those who live may know that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of men, and gives them as is pleasing to his will." This dream I saw, and now, O Dăn′iel, whose name is Bĕl-te-shăz′zar, tell me what it means.' Then Dăn′iel stood surprised and wondering, and was in deep trouble. And I, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, said to him, 'Dăn′iel, let not the dream give you trouble. Fear not to tell me what is the meaning of it.'



NĔB-U-CHAD-NĔZ′ZAR'S REASON LEAVES HIM.

"Then Dăn′iel said to me, 'My lord, O king, may the dream be to those who hate you, and the meaning to your enemies! The tree which you saw, with green leaves, and rich fruit, and height reaching to heaven, and in sight of all the earth; that tree is yourself. You have become great; your power reaches up to heaven, and your rule is over all the lands.

"'And as you saw a Holy One coming down from heaven, saying, "Cut down the tree, and destroy it; but leave its stump in the earth, with a band of iron and of brass until seven years pass over it," this is the meaning, O king, and it is the command of the Most High God that shall come upon my lord the king.

"'You, O king, shall be driven away from men. You shall live with the beasts of the field; you shall be made to eat grass like oxen; and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven; and seven years shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High God rules in your kingdom, and gives it to the one whom he chooses. And as the Holy One gave command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots, so it shall be with you. Your kingdom shall stand and shall be sure to you, and shall come back to you when you have known that he who sits in the heavens shall rule over the earth.

"'And now, O king, take my advice, and break off from your sins, and do right, and show mercy to the poor. It may be that God will give to you more days of peace.'

"All this Dăn′iel said to me, King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar; and it came to pass. Twelve months afterward I was walking in my kingly palace. I looked over the city, and said, 'Is not this great Băb′ў-lon that I have built for my own royal home, by my power, and for my own glory?'

"While the word was in my mouth a voice fell from heaven, saying, 'O King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, the word has been spoken, and your kingdom is gone from you!'

"And in that hour my reason left me, and another heart was given to me, the heart of a beast instead of the heart of a man. I was driven out of my palace, and lived among the beasts, and ate grass as oxen eat it; and my body was wet with the dew of heaven, until my hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and my nails like birds' claws.

"And at the end of seven years my mind came back to me, and my reason returned. I blessed the king of heaven, and praised him that lives forever. My kingdom was given to me once more, my princes and rulers came to me again, and I was again the king over all the lands.

"Now I, Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, praise and honor the king of heaven. His words are truth and his works are right; and those who walk in pride he is able to make humble."

This was the story of the seven years' madness of King Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, and of his reason and his power coming back to him again.

Story Eleven

THE WRITING UPON THE WALL

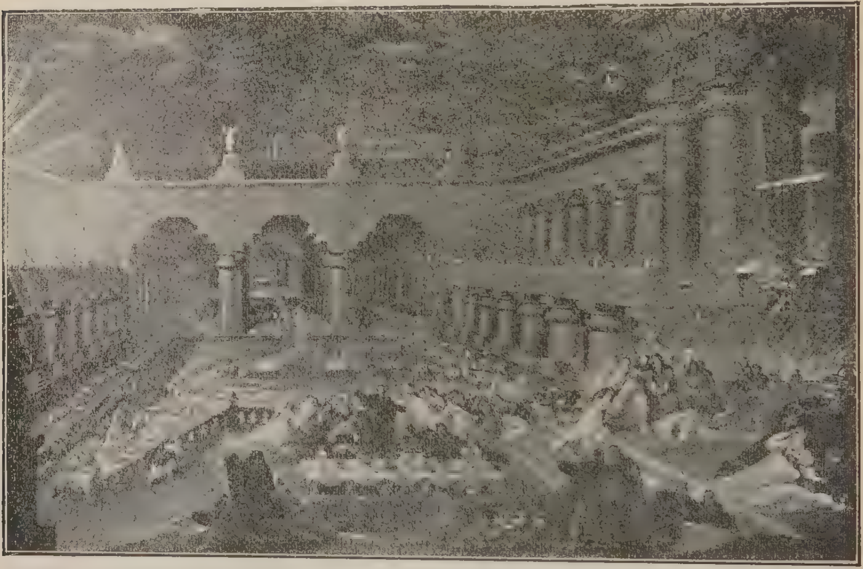
Daniel v : 1 to 31.

THE great kingdom or empire of Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar was made up of many smaller kingdoms which he had conquered. As long as he lived his kingdom was strong; but as soon as he died it began to fall in pieces. His son became king in his place, but was soon slain; and one king followed another quickly for some years. The last king was named Nā-bon′i-dus. He made his son Bĕl-shăz′zar king with himself, and left Bĕl-shăz′zar to rule in the city of Băb′y̆-lon, while he was caring for the more distant parts of the kingdom.

But a new nation was rising to power. Far to the east were the kingdoms of Mē′dĭ-ȧ and Pẽr′şiȧ. These two peoples had become one, and were at war with Băb′y̆-lon, under their great leader, Çȳ′rus. While Bĕl-shăz′zar was ruling in the city of Băb′y̆-lon, Çȳ′rus and his Pẽr′şian soldiers were on the outside, around the walls, trying to take the city. These walls were so great and high that the Pẽr′şian soldiers could not break through them.

But inside the city were many who were enemies of Bĕl′shăz′zar and were friendly with Çȳ′rus. These people opened the gates of Băb′ y̆-lon to Çȳ′rus. At night he brought his army quietly into the city and surrounded the palace of King Bĕl-shăz′zar.

On that night King Bĕl-shăz′zar was holding in the palace a great feast in honor of his god. On the tables were the golden cups and vessels that Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar had taken from the Temple of the Lord in Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm; and around the table were the king, his many wives, and a thousand of his princes and nobles. They did not know that their city was taken, and that their enemies were at the very doors of the palace.



BĔL-SHĂZ′ZAR GIVES A GREAT FEAST IN HONOR OF HIS GOD.

While they were all drinking wine together suddenly a strange thing was seen. On the wall appeared a great hand writing letters and words that no one could read. Every eye was drawn to the spot, and all saw the fingers moving on the wall, and the letters written. The king was filled with fear. His face became pale and his knees shook. He called for the wise men of Băb′y̆-lon, who were with him in the palace, to tell what the writing meant. He said, "Whoever can read the words on the wall shall be dressed in a purple robe, and shall have a chain of gold around his neck, and shall rank next to King Bĕl-shăz′zar as the third ruler in the kingdom."

But not one of the wise men could read it, for God had not given to them the power. At last the queen of Băb′ȳ-lon said to Bĕl-shăz′zar, "O king, may you live forever! There is one man who can read this writing, a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, a man whom Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, your father, made master of all the wise men. His name is Dăn′iel. Send for him, and he will tell you what these words are and what they mean."

Dăn′iel was now an old man; and since the time when Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar died he had been no longer in his high place as ruler and chief adviser of the king. They sent for Dăn′iel, and he came. The king said to him, "Are you that Dăn′iel who was brought many years ago by my father to this city? I have heard of you, that the spirit of the holy gods is upon you, and that you have wisdom and knowledge. If you can read this writing upon the wall, and tell me what it means, I will give you a purple robe, and a gold chain, and a place next to myself as the third ruler in the kingdom."

THE FALL OF BĂB′Ȳ-LON.

And Dăn′iel answered the king, "You may keep your rewards yourself, and may give your gifts to whom you please, for I do not want them; but I will read to you the writing. O king, the Most High God gave to Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar this kingdom, and great power, and glory. But when Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar became proud, and boasted of his greatness, then the Lord took from him his crown and his throne, and let him live among the beasts of the field, until he knew that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of men. O Bĕl-shăz′zar, you knew all this, yet you have not been humble in heart. You have risen up against the Lord, and have taken the vessels of his house, and have drunk wine in them in honor of your own gods of wood and stone; but you have not praised the Lord God who has given to you your kingdom and your power. For this reason God has sent this hand to write these words upon the wall. This is the writing, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. And this is the meaning, Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided.

"MENE: God has counted the years of your kingdom, and has brought it to an end.

"TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and have been found wanting.

"UPHARSIN: Your kingdom is divided, and taken from you, and given to the Mēdeş and the Pĕr′şianş."

King Bĕl-shăz′zar could scarcely believe what he heard; but he commanded that the promised reward be given to Dăn′iel. And almost while he was speaking his end came. The Pĕr′şianş and the Mēdeş burst into his palace; they seized Bĕl-shăz′zar and killed him in the midst of his feast.

On that night the empire or great kingdom set up by Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar came to an end. A new empire arose, greater than that of Băb′y̆-lon, called the Pĕr′şian Empire. And in the place of Bĕl-shăz′zar, Çȳ′rus, the commander of the Pĕr′şianş, made an old man named Dȧ-rī′us king until the time when he was ready to take the kingdom for himself.

This empire of Pĕr′şiȧ was the third of the world-kingdoms of which we read in the Bible. The first was the Ăs-sy̆r′ĭ-an kingdom, having Nĭn′e-veh for its capital. This was the kingdom that carried the Ten Tribes of Ĭş′ra-el into captivity. The second was the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-an or Chăl-dē′an kingdom, which carried the Jewş into captivity. And the third was the Pĕr′şian kingdom, which lasted two hundred years, ruling all the lands named in the Bible.

Story Twelve

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

Daniel vi : 1 to 28.

THE lands which had been the Băb-y̆-lō′ni-an or Chăl-dē′an empire now became the empire of Pẽr′şiȧ; and over these Dȧ-rī′us was the king. King Dȧ-rī′us gave to Dăn′iel, who was now a very old man, a high place in honor and in power. Among all the rulers over the land Dăn′iel stood first, for the king saw that he was wise, and able to rule. This made the other princes and rulers very jealous, and they tried to find something evil in Dăn′iel, so that they could speak to the king against him.

These men knew that three times every day Dăn′iel went to his room, and opened the window that was toward the city of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, and looking toward Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm made his prayer to God. Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm was at that time in ruins, and the Temple was no longer standing; but Dăn′iel prayed three times each day with his face toward the place where the house of God had once stood, although it was many hundreds of miles away.

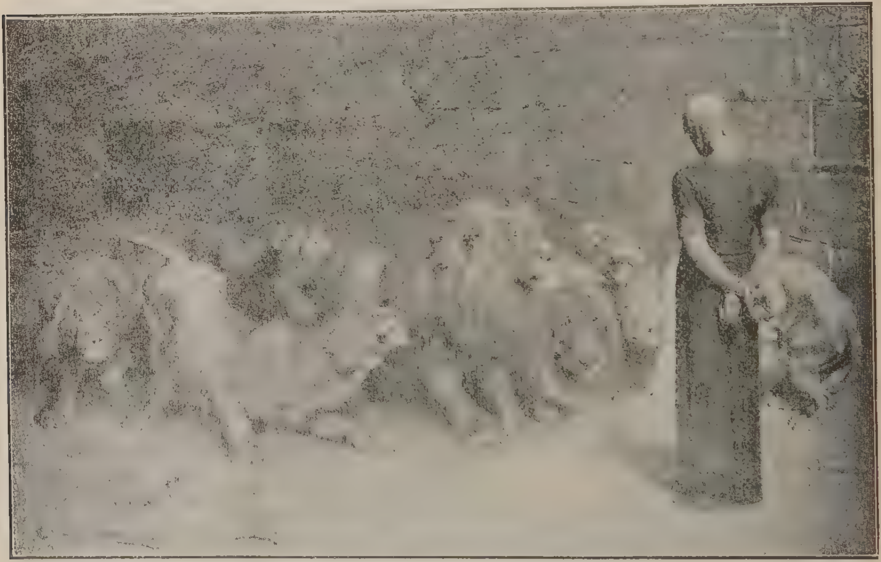
These nobles thought that in Dăn′iel's prayers they could find a chance to do him harm, and perhaps cause him to be put to death. They came to King Dȧ-rī′us, and said to him:

"All the rulers have agreed together to have a law made that for thirty days no one shall ask anything of any god or any man, except from you, O king; and that if any one shall pray to any god, or shall ask anything from any man during thirty days, except from you, O king, he shall be thrown into the den where the lions are kept. Now, O king, make the law, and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, for no law among the Mēdeş and Pẽr′şianş can be altered."

The king was not a wise man, and being foolish and vain, he was pleased with this law which would set him even above the gods. So, without asking Dăn′iel's advice, he signed the writing;

and the law was made, and the word was sent out through the kingdom that for thirty days no one should pray to any god, or ask a favor of any man.

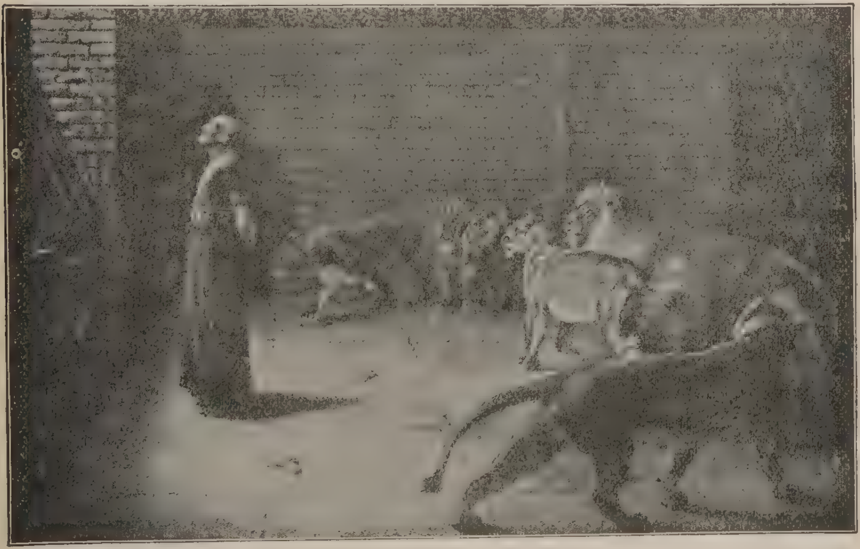
Dăn′iel knew that the law had been made, but every day he went to his room three times, and opened the window that looked toward Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and offered his prayer to the Lord, just as he had prayed in other times. These rulers were watching near by, and they saw Dăn′iel kneeling in prayer to God. Then they came to the king, and said, "O King Dȧ-rī′us, have you not made a law that if any one in thirty days offers a prayer, he shall be thrown into the den of lions?" "It is true," said the king. "The law has been made, and it must stand."


DĂN′IEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS.

They said to the king, "There is one man who does not obey the law which you have made. It is that Dăn′iel, one of the captive Jewṣ. Every day Dăn′iel prays to his God three times, just as he did before you signed the writing of the law."

Then the king was very sorry for what he had done, for he loved Dăn′iel, and knew that no one could take his place in the kingdom. All day, until the sun went down, he tried in vain to find some way to save Dăn′iel's life; but when evening came these men again told him of the law that he had made, and said to him that it must be kept. Very unwillingly the king sent for Dăn′iel, and gave an order that he should be thrown into the den of lions. He said to Dăn′iel, "Perhaps your God, whom you serve so faithfully, will save you from the lions."

They led Dăn′iel to the mouth of the pit where the lions were kept, and they threw him in; and over the mouth they placed a stone; and the king sealed it with his own seal and with the seals of his nobles, so that no one might take away the stone and let Dăn′iel out of the den.



DĂN′IEL ANSWERS THE KING.

Then the king went again to his palace, but that night he was so sad that he could not eat, nor did he listen to music as he was used to listen. He could not sleep, for all through the night he was thinking of Dăn′iel. Very early in the morning he rose up from his bed, and went in haste to the den of lions. He broke the seal, and took away the stone, and in a voice full of sorrow he called out, scarcely hoping to hear any answer except the roaring of the lions, "O Dăn′iel, servant of the living God, has your God been able to keep you safe from the lions?"

And out of the darkness in the den came the voice of Dăn′iel, saying, "O king, may you live forever! My God has sent his angel, and has shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because my God saw that I had done no wrong. And I have done no wrong toward you, O king!"

Then the king was glad. He gave to his servants orders to take Dăn′iel out of the den. Dăn′iel was brought out safe and without harm, because he had trusted fully in the Lord God. Then, by the king's command, they seized those men who had spoken against Dăn′iel, and with them their wives and their children, for the king was exceedingly angry with them. They were all thrown into the den, and the hungry lions leaped upon them, and tore them in pieces as soon as they fell upon the floor of the den.

It was very cruel and unjust to put to death with these men their wives and children, who had done no wrong, either to King Dȧ-rī′us or to Dăn′iel. But cruel and unjust as it was, such things were very common in all the lands of that part of the world. The lives of people were but little cared for, and children often suffered death for their parents' crime.

After this King Dȧ-rī′us wrote to all the lands and the peoples in the many kingdoms under his rule, "May peace be given to you all abundantly! I make a law that everywhere among my kingdoms men fear and worship the Lord God of Dăn′iel, for he is the living God, above all other gods, who only can save men."

And Dăn′iel stood beside King Dȧ-rī′us unto the end of his reign, and afterward while Çȳ′rus the Pĕr′şian was king over all the lands.

Dăn′iel lived for a number of years after being saved from the lions. He had several wonderful dreams and visions, which showed him what would come to pass many years afterward, and even to the coming of Jē′şus Chrīst.

Story Thirteen

THE STORY OF A JOYOUS JOURNEY.

Ezra i : 1, to iii : 7.

WE have seen, in the story of the kingdom of Ĭş′ra-el, or the Ten Tribes, how the great empire of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ arose from the city of Nĭn′e-veh, on the Tī′gris river; how it ruled all the lands and carried away the Ten Tribes of Ĭş′ra-el into captivity, from which they never came back to their own land. We saw, too, how the empire of Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-ȧ went down, and the empire of Băb′ȳ-lon, or Chăl-dē′ȧ, arose in its place under Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar. As soon as Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar died, the empire of Băb′ȳ-lon began to fall, and in its place arose the empire of Pẽr′şiȧ, under Çȳ′rus, who is called Çȳ′rus the Great, because of his many victories and his wide rule. His empire was much greater than either the Ăs-sȳr′ĭ-an or the Chăl-dē′an empire, for it held in its rule the land of Ē′ġȳpt, all the lands known as Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, and also many lands in the far east.

Çȳ′rus, the great king, was a friend to the Jewş, who at this time were still living in the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ, between the Tī′gris and Eū-phrā′tēş rivers. It was now seventy years since the first company of captives had been taken away from the land of Jū′dah by Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, and fifty years since the city of Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm had been burned. By that time the Jewş were no longer looked upon as captives in the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ. They lived in their own houses, and tilled their own farms, and were in peace. Many of them were rich, and some of them, like Dăn′iel and his three friends, were in high places at the court of the king.

You remember that in the early days of the captivity, Jĕr-e-mī′ah the prophet wrote a letter to those who had been carried away to Băb′ȳ-lon, telling them that after seventy years they would come back to their own land. The seventy years were now ended. The older men and women who had been taken away had died in the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ, but their children, and their children's children still loved the land of Jū′dah as their own land, although it was so far away.

The Lord put it into the heart of Çȳ′rus, the king of Pẽr′şiȧ, very early in his reign, to send word among the Jewş that they might now go back to their own land. This was the word, as it was written and sent out:

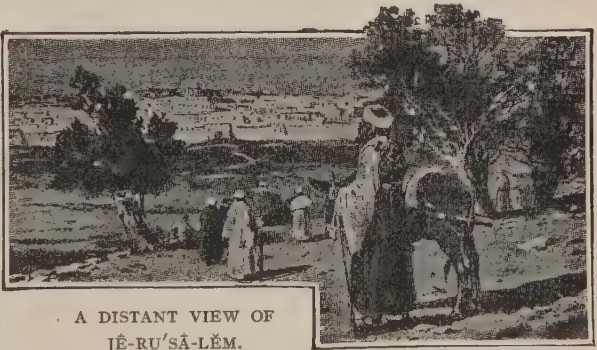
"Thus saith Çȳ′rus, the king of Pẽr′şiȧ, The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he has commanded me to build him a house in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, in the land of Jū′dah. Therefore, let those of the people of God who are among you go up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and help to build the house of the Lord. And those who do not go to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, but stay in the places where they are living, let them give to those who go back to their own land gifts of gold and silver, and beasts to carry them, and goods, and also a free gift toward the building of the house of the Lord in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm."

At this the Jewş in the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ were very glad, for they loved their own land, and longed to see it. One of them wrote a song at this time. It is Psȧlm 126:

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zī′ŏn,
We were like unto them that dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the nations,
'The Lord hath done great things for them,
The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad.
Turn again our captivity, O Lord,
As the streams in the South.
They that sow in tears
Shall reap in joy,
Though he goeth on his way weeping,
Bearing forth the seed,
He shall come again with joy,
Bringing his sheaves with him."

So the Jew′ĭsh people began to make ready for going back in their own land. Those who were rich, and noble in rank, stayed to the land of Chăl-dē′ȧ and in other lands of the Pẽr′şian Empire. But though they did not go back to the land from which their fathers had come, they gave large gifts of gold and silver to help those who did go. And Çȳ′rus, the king, took from the treasure-house in Băb′y̆-lon all the vessels of the Temple that had been taken away by Nĕb-u-chad-nĕz′zar, and gave them to the Jewş, to be used in the new Temple which they were soon to build. These were plates, and dishes, and bowls, and cups of gold and silver, more than four thousand in all. So, with the gifts of the king, and the gifts of their own people, and what was owned by those who went to the land of Jū′dah, the company took away a vast treasure of gold and silver.

It was a happy company of people that met together for the journey back to the land which they still called their own, though very few of them had seen it. There were forty-two thousand of them, besides their servants to help them in the journey. They traveled slowly up the Eū-phrā′tēş river, singing songs of joy, until they reached the northern end of the great desert. Then they turned toward the south-west, and journeyed beside the Lĕb′a-non mountains, past Dȧ-măs′cus, and through Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, until at last they came to the land of their fathers, the land of Jū′dah.



A DISTANT VIEW OF JĖ-RỤ′SȦ-LĔM.

With all their joy they must have felt sad when they saw the city of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm all in ruins, its walls broken down, its houses heaps of blackened stone, its once beautiful Temple burned into a heap of ashes.

As soon as they came, they found the rock where the altar of the Lord had stood, the same rock where Dā′vid had long before offered a sacrifice, and the same rock upon which travelers look even in our time under the Dome of the Rock. From the smooth face of this rock they gathered up the stones, and swept away the ashes and the dust. Then they built upon it the altar of the Lord, and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, the high-priest, began to offer the sacrifices which for fifty years had not been placed upon the altar. Every morning and every afternoon they laid on the altar the burnt-offering, and thus gave themselves to the Lord, and asked God's help.

From this time there were two branches of the Jew′ĭsh race. Those who came back to the land of Jū′dah, which was also called the land of Ĭş′ra-el, were called "Hē′brewş," which was an old name of the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes. Those who stayed in the lands abroad, in Chăl-dē′ȧ and throughout the empire of Pẽr′şiȧ, were called "the Jewş of the Dispersion." There were far more of the Jewş abroad than in their own land, and they were the richer, and the greater people. Many of them went up to Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm to visit and to worship, and many others sent rich gifts; so that between the two great branches of the Jew′ĭsh people, in their own land and in other lands, there was a close friendship, and they all felt that wherever the Jewş were they were still one people.

The Jewş who had been captives in the land of Băb′ȳ-lon were now free to go wherever they chose; and besides those who went back to the land of their fathers, there were many who chose to visit other lands, wherever they could find work and get gain. It was not many years before Jewş were found in many cities of the Pẽr′şian Empire. They went also to Africa, and also to Europe, choosing the cities for their home rather than the country. Everywhere, in all the great cities, the "Jewş of the Dispersion" were found, besides those who were living in their own land of Ĭş′ra-el.

When the Jewş came back to their land their leader was named Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, a word which means "One born in Băb′ȳ-lon." He belonged to the family of Dā′vid, and was called "the prince"; but he ruled under the commands of Çȳ′rus, the great king, for Jū′dah (which now began to be spoken of as Jū-dē′ȧ) was a small part, or "province" as it was called, in the great empire of Pẽr′şiȧ.

Story Fourteen

THE NEW TEMPLE ON MOUNT MORIAH

Ezra iii : 8, to vi : 22; Haggai i : 1, to ii : 23; Zechariah iv : 6 to 10.

AFTER the Jewş came back to their own land they first built the altar upon Mount Mȯ-rī′ah, as we read in the last Story. Then they built some houses for themselves, for the winter was coming on. And early in the next year they began to build again the Temple of the Lord. Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, the prince, and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, the priest, led in the work, and the priests and Lē′vītes helped in it. They gave money to masons, and carpenters, and they paid men of Tȳre and Zī′dŏn, on the shore of the Great Sea, to float down cedar-trees from Mount Lĕb′a-non to Jŏp′pȧ; and from Jŏp′pȧ they carried them up the mountains to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm for the building of the house.

When they laid the first stones in the new building the priests in their robes stood ready with trumpets, and the Lē′vītes with cymbals, to praise the Lord for his goodness in bringing them once again to their own land. The singers sang:

"Praise the Lord, for he is good:
His mercy endureth forever toward Iş′ra-el his people."

And all the people shouted with a great shout as the first stones were laid. But some of the priests, and Lē′vītes, and Jewş, were old men who had seen the first Temple, while it was still standing more than fifty years before. These old men wept as they thought of the house that had been burned, and of their friends who had been slain in the destruction of the city. Some wept, and some shouted, but the sound was heard together, and those who heard at a distance could not tell the weeping from the shouting.

But these builders soon found enemies, and were hindered in their work. In the middle of the land, near the cities of Shē′chem and Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, were living the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tan people, some of whom were from the old Ten Tribes, and others from the people that had been brought into the land by the Ăs-sўr′ĭ-anș many years before. These worshipped the Lord, but with the Lord they worshipped other gods. These people came to the Prince Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, and said, "Let us join with you in building this house, for we seek the Lord as you do, and we offer sacrifices to him."

But Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl and the rulers said to them, "You are not with us, and you do not worship as we worship. You have nothing to do with us in building the Lord's house. We will build by ourselves to our God, the God of Ĭș′ra-el, as Çȳ′rus, the king of Pẽr′șiȧ, has told us to build."

This made the people of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ very angry. They tried to stop the Jewș from building, and frightened them, and wrote letters to the king, urging him to stop the work. Çȳ′rus, the king, was a friend to the Jewș, but he was in a land far away in the east, carrying on war, so that he could not help them; and soon after this he died. His son, who took his great kingdom, did not care for the Jewș, and he, too, died in a few years. Then a nobleman of another family seized the throne, and held it nearly a year before he was slain. His name was Smer′dis, but he is called in the Bible by another name, Är-tăx̱-ẽrx̱′ēș. While this king was reigning, the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tan rulers wrote to him a letter, saying:

"Let it be known to the king that the Jewș have come back to Jė-ru̱′sȧ-lĕm. They are building again the city which was always bad, and would not obey the kings when it was standing before. If that city be built, and its walls finished, then the Jewș will not serve the king, nor pay to him their taxes. We are true to the king, and we do not wish to see harm come to his rule. Of old time this city was rebellious, and for that cause it was laid waste. If it is built again, soon the king will have no power anywhere on this side of the river Eū-phrā′tēș."

The King Smer′dis, or Är-tăx̱-ẽrx̱′ēș, wrote an answer to the chief men of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, thus:

"The letter which you sent has been read to me. I have caused search to be made in the records; and I find that the city of Jė-ru̱′sȧ-lĕm has been in old time a strong city, with great kings ruling in it, and ruling also the lands around it. I find, too, that this city did rise up and make war against the kings of empires in the past. Command the men who are building the city of

Jė-ru̥'sā-lĕm to stop the work; and let it not go on until an order is given from the king."

The Sā-măr'ĭ-tanş and other enemies of the Jewş were glad to have this letter come from the great king of Pĕr'şiȧ. They went to Jė-ru̥'sā-lĕm and made the work of building the Temple and the city stop. So the foundations of the Temple lay unfinished through several years.

But after a time two prophets arose in the land of Jū-dē'ȧ. They were Hăg'ga-ī and Zĕch-a-rī'ah; and they spoke the word of the Lord to the people, telling them to go forward with the building. Hăg'ga-ī said, "Is it a time for you to dwell in richly finished houses of your own while the Lord's house lies waste? Go up to the mountains, and bring wood, and build; and I will be pleased with you, and will bless you, saith the Lord. The glory of this house shall be greater than the glory of the other house, and in this place I will give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

JĒ-RU'SĀ-LĔM OF TO-DAY.

And Zĕch-a-rī'ah, the other prophet, said, "It shall not be by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. The hands of Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall finish it. He shall lay the head-stone with shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto it!'"

Then Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, and the rest of the Jewş, began again, and went on with the work. Soon after this a new king began to reign in Pĕr′şiȧ. He was a wise man and a great ruler, whose name was Dȧ-rī′us.

King Dȧ-rī′us looked in the records of Pĕr′şiȧ, and found it written that Çȳ′rus, the king, had commanded the Temple to be built. He wrote a letter to the rulers in all the lands around Jū′dē-ȧ no longer to hinder the work, but to help it, and to give what was needed for it. Then the Jewş went on with the building in great joy; and it was finished at last, twenty-one years after it had been begun, while Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, the prince, and Jŏsh′u-ȧ, the priest, were still ruling over the people.

The Temple, which was thus built for the second time, was like the one built by Sŏl′o-mon nearly five hundred years before; but though larger, it was not so beautiful nor costly. In front of it was an open court, with a wall around it, where the people could go to worship. Next to the people's court, on higher ground, was the priests' court, where stood the altar, and the laver for washing. Within this court rose the house of God, with the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies, separated by a great vail. In the Holy Place, as before, stood the table for bread, the golden lampstand, and the golden altar for incense. But in the Holy of Holies there was no ark of the covenant, for this had been lost, and was never brought back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. In place of the ark stood a marble block, upon which the high-priest sprinkled the blood, when he went into the Holy of Holies, on the great day of atonement, once in each year. (See the account of the Tabernacle and its worship.)

Story Fifteen

THE BEAUTIFUL QUEEN OF PERSIA

Esther i : 1, to x : 3.

WHEN Dȧ-rī′us, the great king, died, his son Xẽr′xēş, who is called in the Bible Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs, took his place upon the throne of Pẽr′şiȧ. Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs was not, like his father Dȧ-rī′us, a wise man. He was hasty in his temper and did many foolish acts.

At that time the palace where the king of Pẽr′şiȧ lived was no longer at Băb′ȳ-lon, but at a city named Shụ′shan, among the mountains of a region called Ē′lăm. King Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs held at Shụ′shan a great feast with his nobles. When the king and his company were all drunken with wine, he sent for his queen, Văsh′tī, that he might let all the nobles see how beautiful she was. Among the Pẽr′şianş it was held to be very wrong for a woman ever to allow her face to be seen by any man except her husband. Queen Văsh′tī refused to come to the feast that these drunken men might stare at her. This made the king very angry. He said that because Văsh′tī would not obey him, she should not be queen any longer, and he put her away from him and from his house.

After this King Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs thought to choose another woman to be his queen instead of Văsh′tī. He sent commands throughout all the kingdom that in every land and province they should find the most beautiful young women and bring them to the royal city of Shụ′shan. There the king would see them all, and among them he would choose the one that pleased him best, and would take her as his queen. So from every land in the great empire of Pẽr′şiȧ the loveliest young women were brought to Shụ′shan, and there they were left in the care of Hĕg′a-ī, the chief of the king's palace.

At that time many Jewş were living in the cities of Pẽr′şiȧ, for we have seen that only a small part of the Jewş went back to the land of Ĭş′ra-el when King Çȳ′rus allowed them to return. There was a Jew living in Shụ′shan, named Môr′de-cāi. He belonged to the tribe of Bĕn′ja-mĭn, and came from the same family and line with Sa̤ul, the first of the kings of Ĭş′ra-el. At the house of Môr′-de-cāi lived his cousin, a young girl named Hȧ-dăs′sah, or Ĕs′thẽr, a name which means "Star." Her father and mother had died, and she had been left alone; so Môr′de-cāi took her to his house, and brought her up as his own daughter. Ĕs′thẽr was very beautiful, and was as lovely in her heart as she was in her face. Among the other beautiful young women she was taken to the palace as one of those who were to be brought before the king.

When King Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs saw Ĕs′thẽr, the Jew′ĭsh girl, he loved her, and chose her out of all the young women to be his queen, and set upon her head the royal crown of Pẽr′şiȧ. Ĕs′thẽr was taken into the king's palace; rooms and servants were given to her, and she lived in the state of a queen. When the king wished to see her he sent for her, and she came to his room. No one could go to the king or could see him unless sent for. And if any one, man or woman, came before the king without being called, that person was seized by the guards, and was led away to death, unless the king held out toward him his golden scepter, the rod which he held.

In the palace Môr′de-cāi could no longer meet his cousin Ĕs′thẽr, for no man except the king could enter the rooms set apart for the women. But Ĕs′thẽr from her window could see Môr′de-cāi as he walked by, and by her servants she could send word to him, and in the same way could hear word from him. Môr′de-cāi loved the lovely young queen who was to him as a daughter, and every day sat at the gate of the palace to hear from her.

While Môr′de-cāi was sitting by the gate he saw two men who were keepers of the gate often whispering together. He watched them closely, and found that they had made a plan to kill King Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs. He sent word of this to Queen Ĕs′thẽr, and Es′thẽr told the king of it. The men were taken, and, as Môr′de-cāi's word was found to be true, they were both slain by being hanged on a tree. And an account or story of all their plan, of how they were found out by Môr′de-cāi the Jew, and how they were punished by death, was written in the book of records of the kingdom.

After this a man named Hā′man arose to great power in the kingdom. The king gave him a seat above all the other princes, and asked his advice in all matters, and allowed Hā′man to do whatever he pleased. Of course everybody in the palace showed

QUEEN ĔS′THẼR COMING TO THE KING

great respect to Hā′man, the man who stood next to the king. When he came near, all the men in the palace and in the city bowed down before him, and many fell on their faces, even in the very dust. But Môr′de-cāi was a worshipper of God, and he would not fall upon his face before any man. Hā′man noticed that there was one man who did not bow down, as did the others around him. He said to his servants, "Who is that man sitting by the gate, who does not bow down when I pass by?"

They answered Hā′man, "That is Môr′de-cāi the Jew."

But they did not tell Hā′man, for they did not know, that Môr′de-cāi was the cousin of Queen Ĕs′thẽr, and that the queen of Pẽr′ṣiȧ herself was a Jewess.

When Hā′man found that Môr′de-cāi was a Jew he became very angry, not only at Môr′de-cāi, but at all his people. He hated the Jewṣ, and he resolved to have revenge on Môr′de-cāi, and on his account to make all Môr′de-cāi's people suffer. Hā′man went in to the king, and said to him, "O King Ȧ-hăṣ-ū-ē′rŭs, there is a certain people scattered abroad through your kingdom and apart from all other peoples. Their laws are different from those of every other nation, and they do not keep the king's laws. It is not well to allow such a people to live. If it is pleasing to the king, let a law be made that this strange people be destroyed. I will myself pay all the cost of putting them to death, and will place the money in the king's treasury."

The king, living in his palace and never going out among his people, knew nothing of the Jewṣ, and believed Hā′man's words. He took from his hand the ring on which was the royal seal, and gave it to Hā′man, saying:

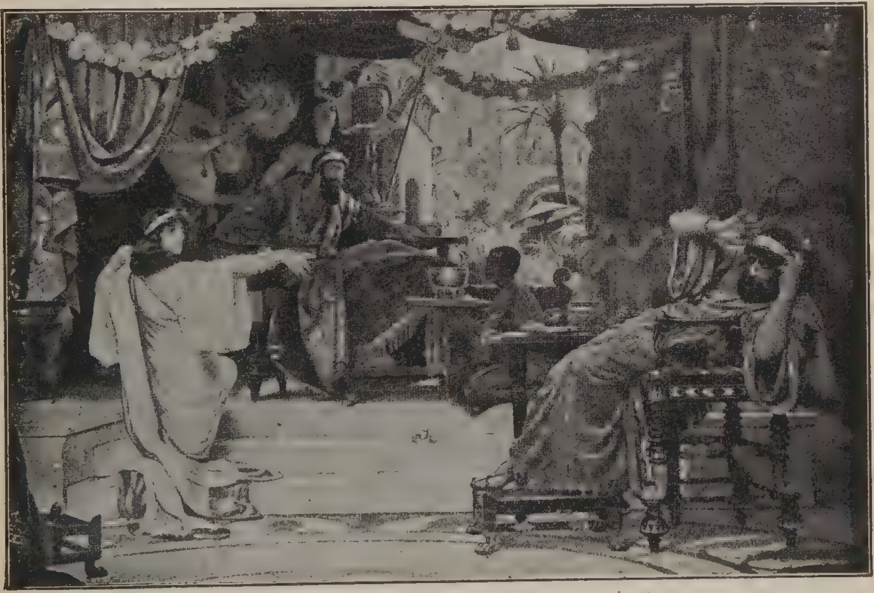
"Do as you please; write whatever law you wish, and stamp it with the king's seal. The money is yours, and I give this strange people to you. You can do with them as you please."

Then, by Hā′man's command, a law was written, and sealed with the king's seal, that on a certain day, which was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, all the Jewṣ in every part of Pẽr′ṣiȧ might be slain. Any one who chose to kill them might do so; and those who killed them might take for their own all their money, the gold, and silver, and garments which they might find in the houses of the Jewṣ.

The copies of this law were sent to every city of the empire of

Pĕr′şiȧ, to be read everywhere, so that all might know that the Jewş were to be destroyed. Everybody who heard of it was filled with wonder, for no one knew of any evil against the king that the Jewş had done to deserve death. They could not understand why the law had been made; but everywhere the enemies of the Jewş made ready to destroy them, that they might have the Jewş' riches; for in those times, even as now, there was great wealth among the Jewş.

The news of this terrible law came to Môr′de-cāi, as it came to



ĖS′THẼR POINTS TO HĀ′MAN AS HER ENEMY.

all the Jewş in Shu̹′shan. Môr′de-cāi tore his clothes, as was the manner of those in deep grief; he put on garments of sackcloth; he covered his head with ashes, and he went forth in front of the palace, crying a loud and bitter cry. Queen Ĕs′thẽr saw him and heard his voice. She sent one of her servants, named Hā′tăch, to Môr′de-cāi, to find why he was in such deep trouble. Hā′tăch came to Môr′de-cāi, and Môr′de-cāi told him of the law for killing the Jewş on a certain day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and gave him a copy of it to show to Queen Ĕs′thẽr; and he told Hā′tăch to ask the queen, in his name, to go in to King Â-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs and beg him to spare the lives of her people. Queen Es′thẽr heard Hā′tăch's words, and sent this message to Môr′de-cāi:

"It is the rule of the palace that if any man or woman shall go in to the king in his own room, without being sent for by the king, he shall be slain unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter. But I have not been called to meet the king for thirty days."

When Môr′de-cāi heard this message he sent word again by Hā′tăch to Queen Ĕs′thẽr:

"Do not think that in the king's palace you are safe, and shall escape the fate of your people. If you keep still, and do nothing to save your people, God will surely save them in some other way; and you and your father's family shall be destroyed. Who can tell whether God has not raised you up and given you your royal place for such a time as this?"

Then Ĕs′thẽr sent this answer to Môr′de-cāi, "Go, and bring together all the Jewş in Shṳ′shan, and let them all pray for me, eating and drinking nothing, for three days. I and my maids in the palace will pray and fast also at the same time. And then I will go in to the king, even though it is against the law; and if it be God's will that I should die in trying to save my people, then I will die."

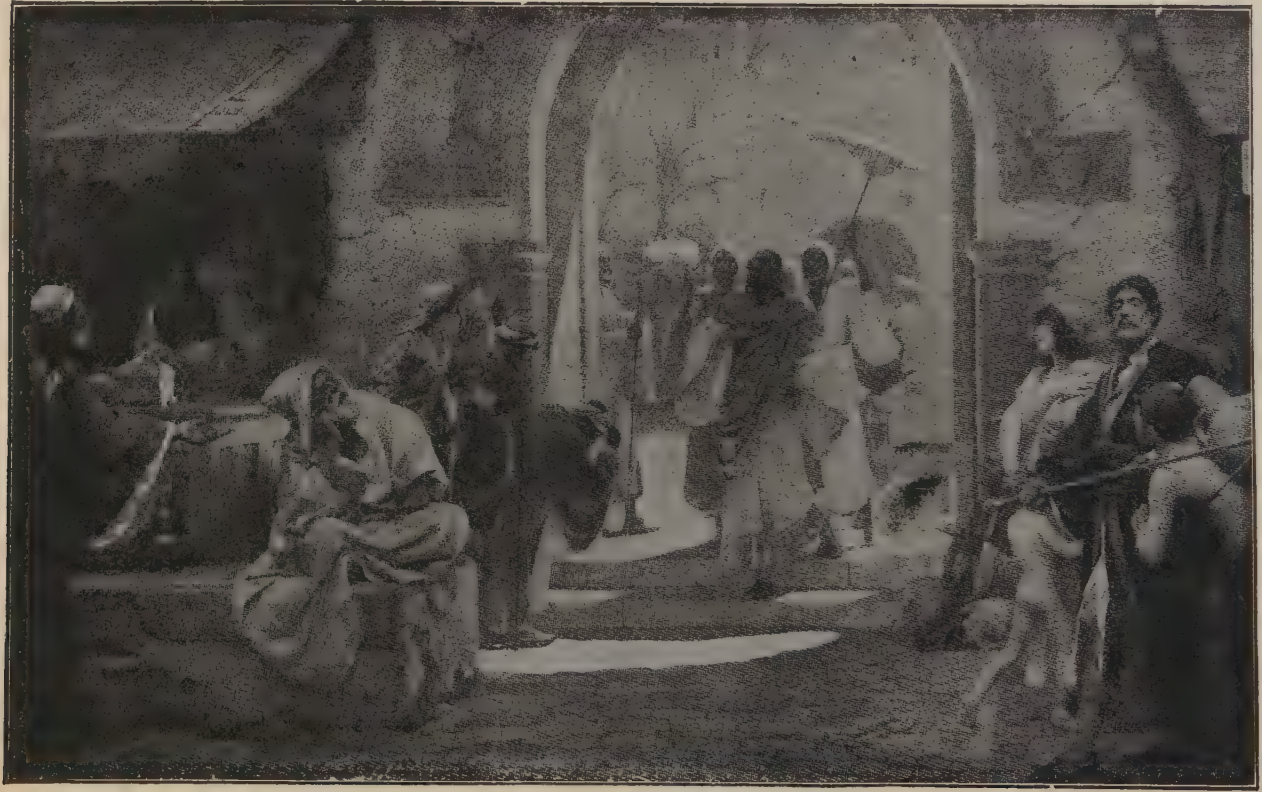
When Môr′de-cāi heard these words he was glad, for he felt sure that God would save his people through Queen Ĕs′thẽr. For three days all the Jewş in Shṳ′shan met together, praying; and in the palace Ĕs′thẽr and her servants were praying at the same time.

The third day came, and Ĕs′thẽr dressed herself in all her robes as queen. She went out of her own rooms, and across the open court, and entered the door in front of the throne where the king was sitting. The king saw her standing before him, in all her beauty, and his heart was touched with love for her. He held out toward her the golden rod or scepter that was in his hand. Ĕs′thẽr came near, and touched the top of the scepter. The king said to her:

"What do you wish, Queen Ĕs′thẽr? It shall be given to you, even to the half of my kingdom."

But Ĕs′thẽr did not at once ask for all that was in her heart. She was very wise, and she said, "If it pleases the king, I have come to ask that the king and Hā′man, the prince, shall come this day to a dinner that I have made ready for them."

The king said, "Send word to Hā′man that he haste, and come to dine with the king and queen."



MÔR′DE-CĀI DOES NOT KNEEL BEFORE HĀ′MAN

So that day King Ȧ-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs and Hā′man sat at the table with the queen. She was covered with a veil, for even Hā′man was not allowed to look upon her face. While they were sitting together, the king said, "Queen Ĕs′thẽr, is there anything that you wish? It shall be given to you, whatever it is, even to half of the kingdom."

"My wish," answered the queen, "is that the king and Hā′man shall come again to a dinner with me to-morrow."

Hā′man walked out of the palace that day happy at the honor that had come to him, but when he saw Môr′de-cāi sitting by the gate, and not rising up to bow before him, all his gladness passed away, and he was angry in his haert. When he came to his own house he told his wife Zē′resh, and his friends, how the king and the queen had honored him, and then he said, "But all this is as nothing to me when I see that man, Môr′de-cāi the Jew, sitting at the king's gate."

But his wife said to him, "That is nothing. Before you go to the feast to-morrow, have a gallows made, and then ask the king to command that Môr′de-cāi be hanged upon it. The king will do whatever you wish, and then, when you have sent Môr′de-cāi to death, you can be happy at your feast with the king and the queen."

This was very pleasing to Hā′man; and on that very day he caused the gallows to be set up, ready for hanging Môr′de-cāi on the next day.

It so happened that on that night the king could not sleep. He told them to read in the book of records of the kingdom, hoping that the reading might put him to sleep. They read in the book how Môr′de-cāi had told of the two men who had sought to murder the king. The king stopped the reading, and said, "What reward has been given to Môr′de-cāi for saving the life of the king from these men?"

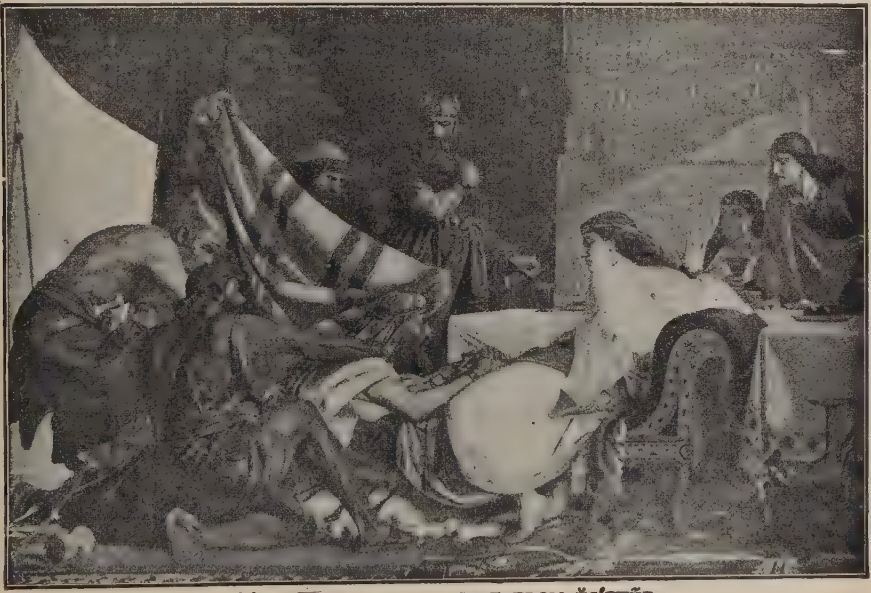
"O king," they answered, "nothing has been done for Môr′de-cāi."

Then said the king, "Is any one of the princes standing outside in the court?"

"Yes, O king," was answered; "the noble Hā′man is in the court."

Hā′man had come in at that very moment to ask the king that Môr′de-cāi might be put to death. The king sent word to Hā′man to come in, and as soon as he entered said to him, "What shall be done to any man whom the king wishes especially to honor?"

Now Hā'man thought within himself, "There is no man whom the king will wish to honor more than myself." Then he said, "The man whom the king wishes especially to honor, let him be dressed in the garments of the king, and let him sit on the horse that the king rides upon, and let the royal crown be set upon his head; let him ride through the main street of the city, and let one of the nobles call out before him, 'This is the man whom the king delights to honor.'"



HĀ'MAN BEGS FOR HIS LIFE FROM ĔS'THĔR.

Then the king said to Hā'man, "Make haste, and do all this that you have said to Môr'de-cāi the Jew, who sits in the king's gate. See that nothing is left out of what you have spoken."

Hā'man was astonished, and was cut to the heart, but he did not dare to speak as he felt. He obeyed the king's command, sent for the king's horse, his robes, and his crown; dressed Môr'de-cāi like a king, mounted him on the horse, and went before him through the street of Shu̧'shan, calling aloud, "This is the man whom the king delights to honor!" And after that Hā′man hid his anger and his sorrow of heart, and sat down to the feast in the queen's palace. He had not said a word to the king of having Môr′de-cāi hanged upon the gallows which he had set up the day before.

King Ā-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs knew very well that his queen had still some favor to ask; and at the feast he said to her, "What do you wish, Queen Ĕs′thẽr? Tell me, and I will give it to you, even though it be half of my kingdom."

Then Ĕs′thẽr saw that her time had come. She said to the king:

"If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please you, let my life be given me, and the lives of my people. For we have been sold, I and all my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. If only we had been sold as slaves, I would have said nothing; but we are to be slain, in order to please our enemy."

Then said the king, "Who is the man, and where is he, that has dared to do this thing?"

"The enemy," said Queen Ĕs′thẽr, "is this wicked Hā′man!"

As the king heard this he was so angry that he rose up from the table, and walked out into the garden. In a moment he came back and saw Hā′man fallen down upon his face, begging the queen to spare his life. The king looked at him in anger, and the servants at once covered Hā′man's face, as of one doomed to death. One of the officers standing near said, "There stands the gallows, seventy-five feet high, which Hā′man set up yesterday for Môr′de-cāi to be hanged upon it."

"Hang Hā′man himself on it," commanded the king. So Hā′man died upon the very gallows that he had made for Môr′de-cāi.

And on that day the king gave Hā′man's place to Môr′de-cāi, and set him over the princes. He gave to Môr′de-cāi his own ring, with its seal. And all the family of Hā′man, his sons, were put to death for their father's evil-doing, according to the cruel usage of those times.

The law for killing the Jewş on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month had been made and sent abroad; and no law of the Pẽr′şianş could be changed. But though this law could not be taken back, another law was made that the Jewş could defend themselves against any who might try to do them harm. When the day came most of their enemies feared to harm the Jewş, for now they were under the care of the king, and Môr′de-cāi, a Jew, stood next to the king; and such of their enemies as tried to kill them on that day were soon destroyed.

So everywhere, instead of sorrow and death, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the Jewş had joy and gladness. And on the day following, the fourteenth day of the twelfth month, the Jewş kept a feast of thanksgiving to God for his mercy in saving them from their enemies. The same feast was kept on that day every year afterward, and it is still kept among the Jewş in all lands, and is called the feast of Pū′rim. On that feast the story of Ĕs′thẽr, the beautiful queen, is read by all the Jew′ĭsh people.

Story Sixteen

THE SCRIBE WHO WROTE THE OLD TESTAMENT

Ezra vii : 1, to x : 44.

FROM the court of the great king at Shụ′shan we turn once more to the Jewş at Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and in Jū-dē′ȧ. For a long time after the first company came to the land under Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl very few Jewş from other countries joined them. The Jewş in Jū-dē′ȧ were poor, and discouraged. Many of them had borrowed money which they could not pay, and had been sold as slaves to richer Jewş. Around them on every side were their enemies, the idol-worshipping people in the land, and the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş, on the north. These enemies robbed them of their crops in the field, and they also constantly sent evil and false reports of them to the Pẽr′şian governors. Many of the men of Ĭş′ra-el had married women of the land not of the Ĭş′ra-el-īte race, and their children were growing up half heathen and half Jew′ĭsh, unable to talk in the language of their fathers, and knowing nothing of the true God.

Ninety years after the Jewş had come back to the land Jė-rṳ′să-lĕm was a small town, with many of its old houses still in ruins, and no wall around it. In those times no city could be safe from its enemies without a wall; so that Jė-rṳ′să-lĕm lay helpless against bands of robbers who came up from the desert and carried away nearly all that the people could earn.

Just at the time when the land was in the deepest need God raised up two men to help his people. These two men were Ĕz′rȧ and Nē-he-mī′ah. Through Ĕz′rȧ the people of Jū′dah were led back to their God, to worship him, to serve him, and especially to love God's book as they never had loved it before. And about the same time Nē-he-mī′ah gave new hope, and courage, and strength to the people by helping them to build a wall around Jė-rṳ′să-lĕm. The work of these two men brought to Jū-dē′ȧ peace and plenty, and led many Jewş from other lands to their own country.

Ĕz′rȧ was a priest, living in the city of Băb′ȳ-lon, though he had sprung from the family of Aâr′on, the first priest. He was also a prophet, through whom God spoke to his people. But above all, Ĕz′rȧ was a lover of God's book in a time when the book of the Lord was almost forgotten. Nearly all the books of what we call the Old Testament had been written for a long time; but in those days there were no printed books; each copy was written separately with a pen; and as the labor was great, there were very few copies of the different books of the Bible. And these copies were in different places; one book of the Bible was in one place, another book was in another place. No one man in those times before Ĕz′rȧ had ever owned or had ever seen the whole of the Old Testament in one book or set of books.

Ĕz′rȧ began to seek everywhere among the Jewş for copies of these different books. Whenever he found one he wrote it out, and kept the copy, and also led other men to copy the books as they found them. At last Ĕz′rȧ had copies written of all the books in the Old Testament except the very latest books. They were written very nearly as we have them now, except that his copies were all in Hē′brew, the language spoken by the men who wrote most of the Old Testament.

Ĕz′rȧ put all these different books together, making one book out of many books. This great book was written on parchment, or sheepskin, in long rolls, as in old time all books were written. When the book was finished it was called "The Book of the Law," because it contained God's law for his people, as given through Mō′ṣeṣ, and Săm′u-el, and Dā′vid, and Ī-ṣā′iah, and all the other prophets.

When Ĕz′rȧ had finished writing this book of the law, he went on a long journey from Băb′y̆-lon to Jū-dē′ȧ, taking with him the rolls of the book. With Ĕz′rȧ went a company of men whom he had taught to love the law, to write copies of it, to read it, and to teach it to others. These men, who gave their lives to studying, and copying, and teaching the law, were called "scribes," a word which means "writers."

Ĕz′rȧ was the first and the greatest of these scribes; but from his time there were many scribes among the Jewṣ, both in Jū-dē′ȧ and in all other lands. For wherever the Jewṣ lived they began to read the Bible and to love it. The time came, soon after Ĕz′rȧ's day, when in every place where the Jewṣ met to worship at least one copy of all the books in the Old Testament was kept; so that there was no more danger that the Bible, or any part of it, would be lost.

You remember that there was only one Temple for all the Jewṣ in the world, and only one altar. Upon this one altar, and there alone, was offered the sacrifice every day. But the Jewṣ in distant places needed to meet together for worship, and there grew up among the Jewṣ everywhere what was called "the Synagogue," a word which means "coming together." At first they met in a room, but afterward they built houses for the synagogues much like our churches. Some of these synagogues were large and beautiful, and in them the people met every week to worship God, to sing the Psalms, to hear the law and the prophets read, and to talk together about what they had heard. It was something like a prayer-meeting, for any Jew who wished to speak in the meeting could do so. The men sat on mats laid on the floor; the rulers of the synagogue were on seats raised up above the rest; the women were in a gallery on one side, covered with a lattice-work, so that they could see and hear, but could not be seen. And on the end of the room nearest to Jē-ru′sȧ-lĕm there was a large box or chest, called "the ark," within which were kept the copies of the books of the Old Testament. Thus through the synagogue all the Jewṣ in the world listened to the reading of the Old Testament until very many of them knew every word of it by heart. All this came to pass from Ĕz′rȧ's work in copying and teaching the word of the Lord.

And Ĕz′rȧ wrought another work almost as great as that of giving the Bible to the world. He taught the Jew′ĭsh people, first in Ĭş′ra-el, and then in other lands, that they were the people of God, and that they must live apart from other nations. If they had gone on marrying women of other races, who worshipped other gods, after a time there would have been no Jewş, and no worshippers of God. Ĕz′rȧ made some of them give up their wives of other nations, and he taught the Jewş to be a people by themselves, keeping away from those who worshipped idols, even though they lived among them. Thus Ĕz′rȧ led the Jewş to look upon themselves as a holy people, given up to the service of God: and he taught them to live apart from other nations, with their own customs and ways of living, and very exact in obeying the law of God in the books given by Mō′şeş, even in some things that would seem small and not important. They were to be trained age after age in the service and worship of God. It was God's will that the Jewş should be separate from other peoples, and very strict in keeping their law, until the time should come for them to go out and preach the Gospel to all the world. But that was long after Ĕz′rȧ's day.

The Jewş even now in our time continue to keep many of the rules that were given to their fathers long ago by Ĕz′rȧ; so next to Mō′şeş, Ĕz′rȧ had greater power over the Jewş than any other prophet or teacher.

Story Seventeen

THE NOBLEMAN WHO BUILT THE WALL OF JERUSALEM

Nehemiah i : 1, to vii : 73.

WHILE the good scribe Ĕz′rȧ was at work finding the books of the Bible, and copying them, and teaching them, another great man was helping God's people in another way. This man was Nē-he-mī′ah̀. He was a nobleman of high rank at the court of the great King Ăr-tăx̱-ẽrx̱′ēş. Ăr-tăx̱-ẽrx̱′ēş reigned after Ā-hăş-ū-ē′rŭs, of whom we read in the story of the beautiful Queen Ĕs′thẽr.

Nē-he-mī′ah was the "cup-bearer" to the king of Pẽr′şiȧ at Shṳ′shan. It was his office to take charge of all the wine that was used at the king's table, to pour it out and hand the cup to the king. This was an important office, for he saw the king every day at his meals, and could speak with him, as very few of even the highest princes could speak. Then, too, the life of the king was in his hands, for if he were an enemy he could have allowed poison to be put into the wine to kill the king. So the cup-bearer was always a man whom the king could trust as his friend.

Nē-he-mī′ah was a Jew, and, like all the Jewş, felt a great love for Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. At one time a Jew named Hȧ-nā′nī, and certain of his friends who had come from Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, visited Nē-he-mī′ah. Nē-he-mī′ah asked them, "How are the Jewş in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm doing? How does the city look?"

And they answered, "The people who are living in the land of Jū-dē′ȧ are very poor, and are looked down upon by all around them. The wall of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

When Nē-he-mī′ah heard this he was filled with sorrow for his city and his people. After the Jewş left him he sat down for days, and would eat nothing. He fasted, and wept, and prayed. He said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great God, who keeps his promises to those who love him and do his will; hear, O Lord, my prayer for the people of Ĭş′ra-el, thy servants. We have done very wickedly, O Lord, and because of our sins thou hast scattered us among the nations. Now, O Lord, give me grace this day in the sight of this man, the king of Pĕr′şiȧ, and may the king help me to do good and to help my people in the land of Ĭş′ra-el."

A few days after this Nē-he-mī′ah was standing beside the king's table, while the king and queen were seated at their meal. As he poured out the wine the king saw that his face was sad, which was not usual, for Nē-he-mī′ah was of a cheerful spirit, and generally showed a happy face. The king said to him, "Nē-he-mī′ah, why do you look so sad? You do not seem to be sick. I am sure that there is something that gives you trouble. What is it? Tell me."

Then Nē-he-mī′ah was afraid that the king might be displeased with him, but he said, "Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city where my fathers are buried lies waste, with its walls broken down, and its gates burned with fire?"

The king said, "Do you wish to ask of me any favor? Tell me what I can do to help you."

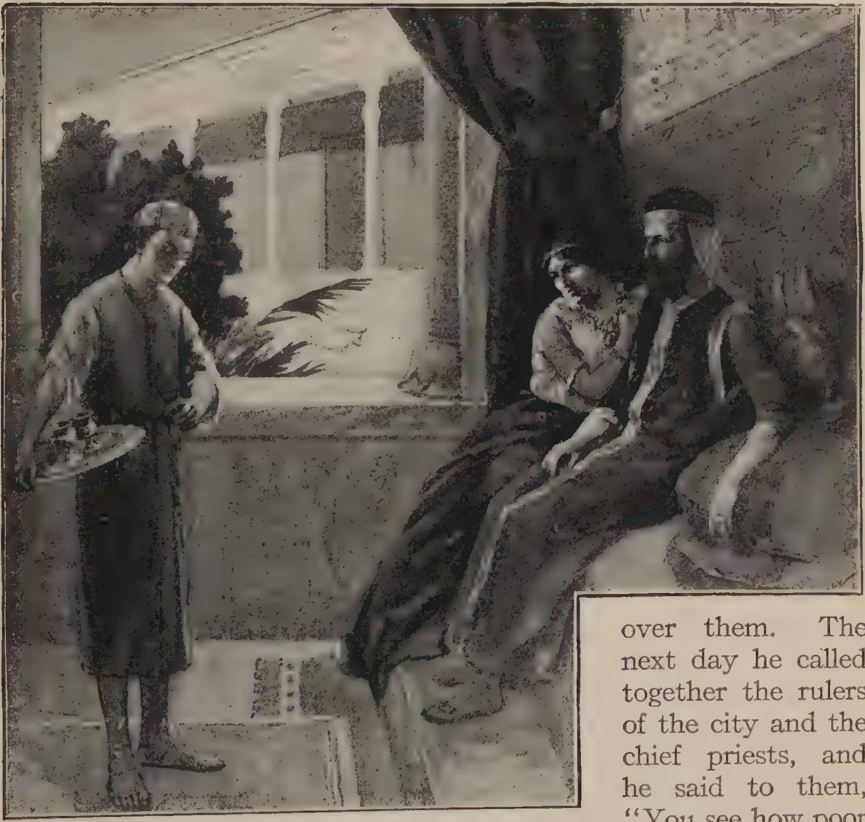
Then Nē-he-mī′ah lifted up a silent prayer to God, and said, "May it please the king, I would be glad if you would send me to Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, in the land of Jū′dah, with an order to build the walls."

The king said, "How long will the journey be? And when will you come back?"

Nē-he-mī′ah fixed upon a time, and told the king how long it would be, and he asked also that he might have letters to the men who ruled the different provinces through which he would pass, for them to give him a safe journey; and also a letter to the keeper of the king's forest, to give him wood for the beams of a house which he wished to build, and for repairing the Temple, and for building the wall. The king was kind to Nē-hē-mī′ah, and he gave him all that he asked.

Nē-he-mī′ah, with a company of horsemen and many friends, made the long journey of almost a thousand miles to Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm. All the people were glad to have a visit from a man of such high rank, and the whole city rejoiced at his coming. But Nē-he-mī′ah was distressed as he saw how poor and mean and helpless the city lay.

One night, without telling any of the men in the city his purpose, he rose up with a few of his freinds, and by the light of the moon rode on his horse around the city. There he saw in how many places the walls were mere heaps of ruins, and gates were broken down and burned. He found great heaps of ashes, and piles of stone, so that in some places his horse could not walk over them. The next day he called together the rulers of the city and the chief priests, and he said to them, "You see how poor and helpless this city lies, without walls, or gates, and open to all its enemies. Come, let us build the wall of Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm, so that no longer other people may look upon us with contempt." Then he told them how God had heard his prayer, and had made the king friendly, and had sent gifts to help them. Then the people and the rulers said, "Let us rise up



NĒ-HE-MĪ'AH THE CUP-BEARER BEFORE THE KING AND QUEEN.

and build the wall!" So at once they began the work. Each family in Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm agreed to build a part of the wall. The high-priest said that he would build one of the gates, and the wall beside it to a certain tower. Some of the rich men built a long space, and others did very little, and some would do nothing. One man built just as much of the wall as would stand in front of his house, and no more, and another man only as much as fronted upon his own room. One man and his daughters hired workers to build; the goldsmiths built some, and so did the apothecaries, the men who sold medicines; and the merchants built a part. Almost all the men of the city, and some of the women, took part in the building, for the people had a mind to work.

Soon the news went abroad through Jū-dē′ȧ and the lands around, that the walls of Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm were rising from their ruins. There were many who were far from pleased as they heard this, for they hated the Jews̩ and their God, and they did not wish to see Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm strong, as it had been of old. The leader of these enemies was a man named Săn-băl′lat, who came from Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, where all the people were jealous of the Jews̩.

"What are these feeble Jews̩ doing?" said Săn-băl′lat. "Do they intend to make their city strong? Will they pile up stones out of the rubbish of the burned city?"

And his servant Tȯ-bī′ah was with him, saying, "Why, if a fox should go up, he could break down their little wall!"

The Ă-rā′bĭ-ans̩ from the desert, and the Phĭ-lĭs′tĭnes̩ from Ăsh′dŏd on the plain, and the Ăm′mon-ītes from the east of Jôr′dan, saw that if the wall should be built they could no more rob and plunder the city. They tried to form an army to come against the city and stop building. But Nē-he-mī′ah prayed to God for help, and he chose watchmen who should go around the wall, and look out for the coming of the enemies. Half of Nē-he-mī′ah's men worked on the wall, and the other half held the bows, and spears, and armor of the workers. And in some places a man would hold a spear in one hand while he spread mortar with the other. At other places men worked with their swords hanging at one side, ready for the fight any moment.

Nē-he-mī′ah rode on his horse around the wall, and his servant walked beside him with a trumpet. He said, "The work is large, and you are apart from each other. Whenever you hear the sound of the trumpet, leave your work, take your arms, and go to the place where it sounds; and there the Lord will fight for us."

But their enemies were not strong enough to fight the Jewş; so Săn-băl'lat, and Tō̤-bī'ah, and another of their leaders named Ḡē'shem, sent a letter to Nē-he-mī'ah, saying, "Come and meet us in one of the villages on the plain near the Great Sea, and let us talk over this matter."

Now Nē-he-mī'ah knew that to go to this place and then come back again to Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm would take more than a week; and he sent answer thus, "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down; why should the work stop, while I leave it, to come down and talk with you?"

Over and over again they sent for Nē-he-mī'ah, but he refused to come. Finally, Săn-băl'lat sent a letter, with this message:

"It is told among all the people, and Ḡē'shem says it is a fact, that you are building this city to rebel against the king of Pẽr'şiȧ, and to set up a kingdom of your own. Come now, and let us talk with you, or trouble may come to you."

Nē-he-mī'ah wrote back, "You know very well that there is no truth in all these stories. You have made them up yourselves."

Some of the Jewş in the city were friendly to these enemies outside, and these men tried to frighten Nē-he-mī'ah. One of them made believe that he was a prophet, and said to Nē-he-mī'ah, "Go into the Temple and hide, for in the night your enemies will come to kill you!"

"Should such a man as I am run away and hide himself?" said Nē'he-mī'ah. "No; I will not go."

So earnestly did the men of Jū'dah work that in fifty-two days after the work was begun it was finished, and the gates were hung, and guards were placed within, so that no enemies might enter. Thus Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm began to rise from its weakness and helplessness, and once more to be a strong city.

Story Eighteen

EZRA'S GREAT BIBLE CLASS IN JERUSALEM

Nehemiah viii : 1, to xiii : 31; Malachi i : 1, to iv : 6.

WHEN the wall of Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm was finished, Nē-he-mī′ah called together all the Jewş from the villages and cities in the land to meet in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. They met, a great company with their wives and children, in an open place before the Temple. Ĕz′rȧ, the good priest and scribe, who had wrought so great a work in bringing together and writing the books of the Old Testament, was in the city at that time. They asked Ĕz′rȧ to being the book, and to read the law of the Lord to the people.

He came, carrying with him the great rolls upon which the law was written, and stood up on a pulpit which they had built, where all the people could see him; and with Ĕz′rȧ were men whom he had taught in the law, so that they could teach it to others.

When Ĕz′rȧ stood up in the pulpit, above the heads of the people, and unrolled the scroll, all the people, who had been sitting upon the ground, rose up, while Ĕz′rȧ gave thanks to the Lord, who had given to them his law. Then the people said "Amen!" with a loud voice, and they bowed until their heads touched the ground, and worshipped.

Then Ĕz′rȧ began to read in the book, aloud, so that as many as possible could hear. But as the people did not all understand the old Hē′brew tongue in which the book was written, men were chosen to stand by Ĕz′rȧ; and as he read each sentence, these men explained it to the people, while all the people stood listening. So, as Ĕz′rȧ read, these men told its meaning, so that the people could understand the word of the Lord.

Many of the people had never heard God's law read before, and they wept as they listened to it. But Nē-he-mī′ah, who was

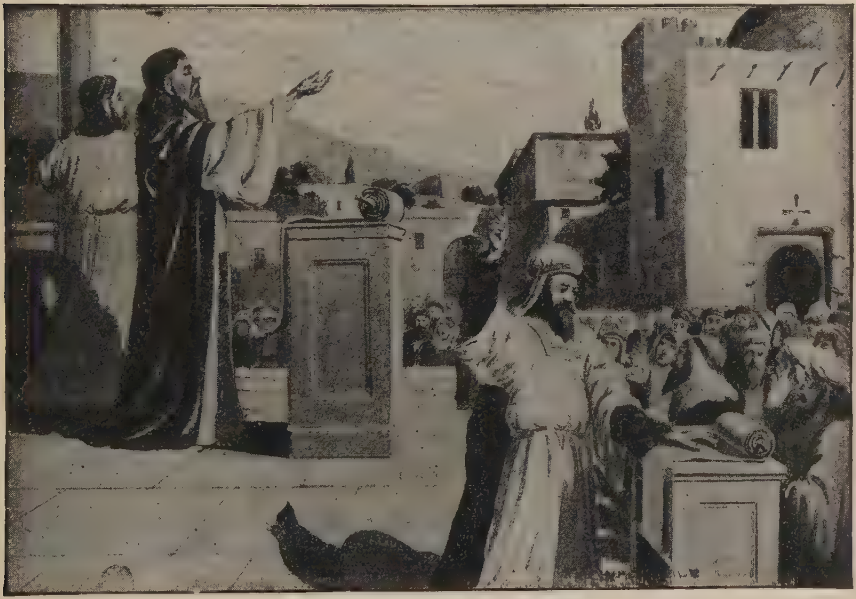
STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

there as the ruler, said to them, "This day is holy to the Lord; do not mourn nor weep, but rather be glad, and eat and drink, and send gifts of food to those who are in need, for you are strong in the Lord, and should be joyful."

And the Lē′vītes quieted the people, saying, "Hold your peace, for the day is holy. Do not weep, but be glad in the Lord."

And all the people went home to feast and to be glad, because they could hear and understand the words of God's law.

After this another meeting was held, and the people confessed their sins before God, and the sins of their fathers in forsaking God's law, and in not doing his will. And all the people made a solemn promise that they would keep God's law, and would do his will; that they would be God's people, and no more give their sons to marry women who did not worship the Lord; that they would keep holy God's day, the Sabbath; and they would give to the Lord's house for all the offerings. And they wrote the promise on a roll, and all the princes and rulers and priests signed it, and placed their seals upon it.



ĔZ′RȦ′S GREAT BIBLE CLASS.

Nē-he-mī′ah had now finished the work for which he had made the long journey to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm. He went back to Shu̥′shan, and stood once more in his place, pouring the wine at the king's table. But after some years he came again to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm. He found that not all the people had fulfilled their promises to serve the Lord, and especially, that the Sabbath-day was not kept as it should be. People were treading wine-presses, and bringing into the city loads of grain, and selling wine, and grapes and figs, on the Sabbath-day. And men from the city of Tȳre, beside the Great Sea, who were not worshippers of the Lord, brought in fish, and sold them on the Sabbath. When Nē-he-mī′ah saw all these evils, he was greatly displeased, and said to the rulers of the city, "Why do you allow these evil things to be done, and the Sabbath-day to be broken? Were not these the very things that made God angry with our fathers, so that he let this city be destroyed? Will you bring God's anger upon us again by doing such things on God's holy day?"

Then Nē-he-mī′ah gave orders that before the sun set on the evening before the Sabbath the gates of the city should be shut, and not opened until the morning after the Sabbath was over. The men came with their things to be sold, and waited outside for the gates to be opened. Nē-he-mī′ah looked over the wall, and saw them, and said to them, "What are you doing here? If you come here again on the Sabbath, I will put you in prison!"

Then they went away, and came no more upon the holy day. By such strong acts as these Nē-he-mī′ah led the people to a more faithful service of the Lord. And after this Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm grew large and strong, and was full of people. And Jewș from other lands began to come to live in the land, until it was once more filled with cities and towns; and the hills over all the land were covered with vineyards and oliveyards, and the plains were waving with fields of grain.

A little after the time of Ĕz′rȧ and Nē-he-mī′ah, Măl′a-chī arose as the last of the prophets of the Old Testament.

"Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. And the Lord shall suddenly come to his Temple; behold, he cometh, saith the Lord. Behold, I will send you Ē-lī′jah, the prophet, before the great day of the Lord shall come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers."

And with these words the Old Testament ends.

Part Sixth

The Life and Teachings of Jesus

Story One

THE ANGEL BY THE ALTAR

Luke i : 1 to 80.

AT the time when the story of the New Testament began, the land of Ĭş′ra-el, called also the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, was ruled by a king named Hĕr′od. He was the first of several Hĕr′ods, who at different times ruled either the whole of the land, or parts of it. But Hĕr′od was not the highest ruler. Many years before this time, the Rō′mans, who came from the city of Rome in Italy, had won all the lands around the Great Sea, the sea which we call the Mĕd-ĭ-ter-rā′nē-an; and above King Hĕr′od of Jū-dē′ȧ was the great king at Rome, who was called "Emperor," ruling over all the lands, and over the land of Jū-dē′ȧ among them. So Hĕr′od, though king of Jū-dē′ȧ, obeyed his over-lord, the emperor at Rome. At the time when this story began, the emperor at Rome was named Ạu-gŭs′tus Çæ′şar.

At this time the land where the Jewş lived was full of people. Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm was its largest city, and in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm was standing the Temple of the Lord, which King Hĕr′od had begun to build anew, taking the place of the old Temple built in the time of Zė-rŭb′ba-bĕl, which had long needed repair. There were also many other large cities besides Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. In the south was Hē′bron, among the mountains; on the shore of the Great Sea were Gā′zȧ, and Jŏp′pȧ, and Çæs-a-rē′a. In the middle of the land were Shē′chem and Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ; and in the north were Năz′a-rĕth and Cā′nȧ; down by the shore of the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee were Tī-bē′rĭ-as, and Ca-pẽr′na-ŭm, and Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ. Far up in the north, at the foot of snowy Mount Hē′bron, was another Çæs-a-rē′a; but so that it might not be confused with Çæs-a-rē′a upon the sea-coast, this city was called Çæs-a-rē′ȧ-Phĭ-lĭp′pī, or "Phĭl′ip's Çæs-a-rē′ȧ," from the name of one of Hĕr′od's sons.

One day, an old priest named Zăch-a-rī′as was leading the service of worship in the Temple. He was standing in front of the golden altar of incense, in the Holy Place, and was holding in his hand a censer or cup full of burning coals and incense; while all the people were worshipping in the court of the Temple, outside the court of the priests, where the great altar of burnt-offering stood.

Suddenly Zăch-a-rī′as saw an angel from the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. He felt a great fear when he saw this strange being, with shining face; but the angel said to him:

"Do not be afraid, Zăch-a-rī′as; for I have come from the Lord to bring you good news. Your wife Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth shall have a son, and you shall name him Jŏhn. You shall be made glad, for your son Jŏhn shall being joy and gladness to many. He shall be great in the sight of the Lord; and he shall never taste wine nor strong drink as long as he lives; but he shall be filled with God's Holy Spirit. He shall lead many of the people of Ĭş′ra-el to the Lord, for he shall go before the Lord in the power of Ê-lī′jah the prophet, as was promised by Măl′a-chī, the last of the old prophets (see the last Story). He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and those who are disobeying the Lord to do his will."

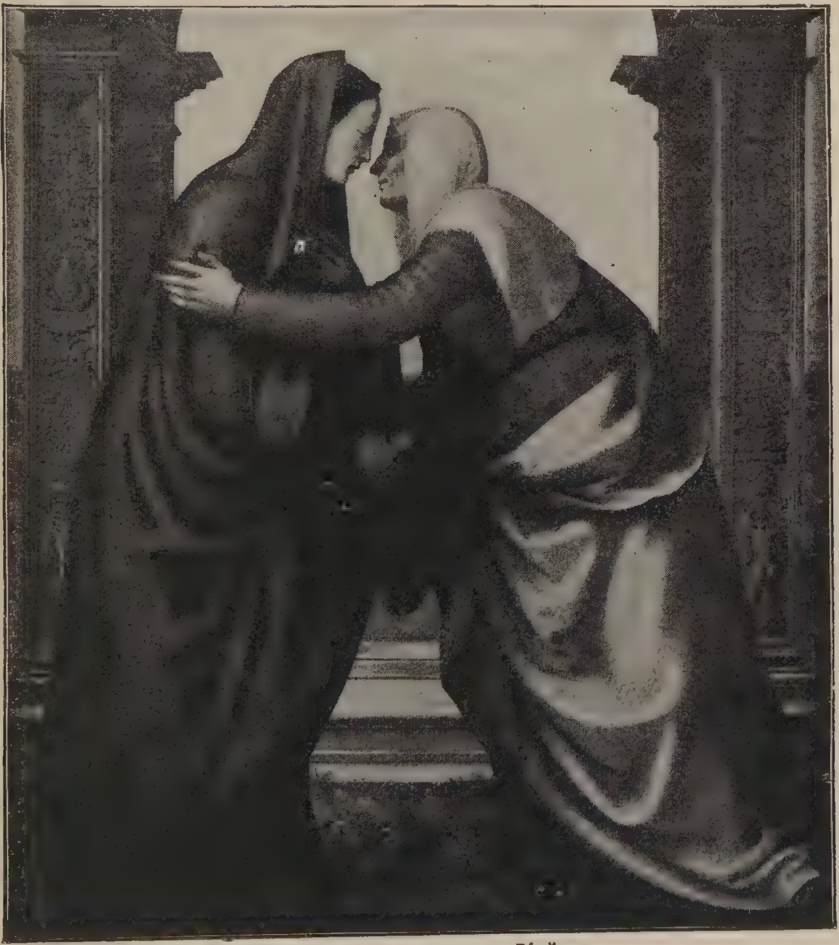
As Zăch-a-rī′as heard these words, he was filled with wonder, and could hardly believe them true. He was now an old man, and his wife Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth was also old; so that they could not expect to have a child. He said to the angel:

"How shall I know that your words are true, for I am an old man, and my wife is old?"

"I am Gā′brĭ-el, that stand in the presence of God," said the angel, "and I was sent from the Lord to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. But because you did not believe my words, you shall become dumb, and shall not be able to speak until this which I have said comes to pass."

All this time, the people outside, in the court, were wondering why the priest stayed so long in the Temple. When at last he came out, they found that he could not speak a word; but he made signs to them, to tell them that he had seen a vision in the Temple.

After the days of his service were over, Zăch-a-rī′as went to his own home, which was near Hē′bron, a city of the priests, among the mountains in the south of Jū-dē′ȧ. When his wife Ē̂-lĭṣ′a-bĕth found that God was soon to give her a child, she was very happy, and praised the Lord. About six months after Zăch-a-rī′as saw the vision in the Temple, the same angel Gā′brĭ-el was sent from the Lord to a city in the part of the land called Găl′ĭ-lee. which was in the north. The city to which the angel was sent was Năz′a-rĕth.



Ē̂-LĬṢ′A-BĔTH GREETS MĀ′RY̆.

There the angel found a young girl named Mā′rў̆, who was a cousin to Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth. Mā′rў̆ was soon to be married to a good man who had sprung from the line of King Dā′vid, though he was not himself a king, or a rich man. He was a carpenter or wood-worker, living in Năz′a-rĕth, and his name was Jō′şeph. The angel came into the room where Mā′rў̆ was, and said to her:

"Hail, woman favored by the Lord; the Lord is with you!"

Mā′rў̆ was surprised at the angel's words, and wondered what they could mean. Then the angel spoke again, and said:

"Do not be afraid, Mā′rў̆. The Lord has given to you his favor, and has chosen you to be the mother of a son whose name shall be Jē′şus, which means 'salvation,' because he shall save his people from their sins. He shall be great; and shall be called the Son of God; and the Lord shall give to him the throne of his father Dā′vid. He shall be a king; and shall reign over the people of God forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

But Mā′rў̆ could not see how all this was to come to pass. And the angel said to her:

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High God shall be over you; and the holy child which you shall have shall be called the Son of God."

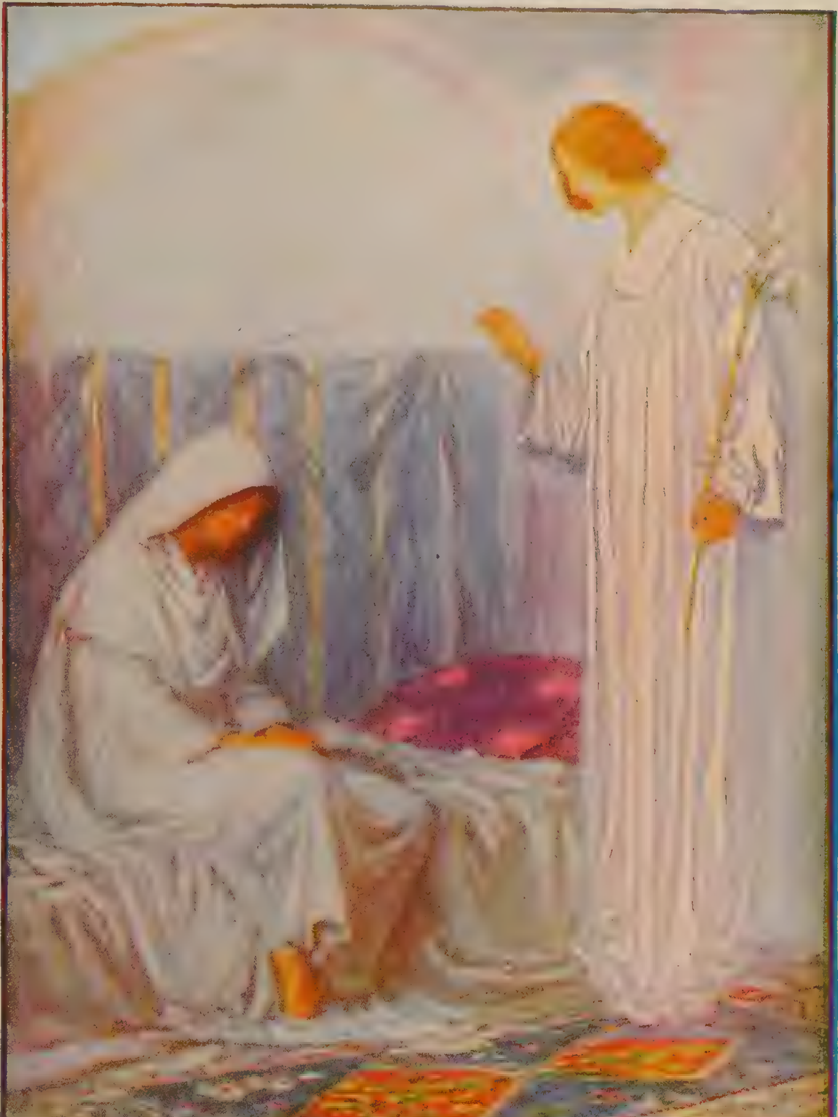
Then the angel told Mā′rў̆ that her cousin Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth was soon to have a child, through the power of the Lord. And when Mā′rў̆ heard all this she said, "I am the servant of the Lord, to do his will. Let it be to me as you have said."

When the angel had given his message and had gone away, Mā′rў̆ rose up in haste, and made a journey to the home of Zăch-a-rī′as and Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth, eighty miles away in the south country. When Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth saw Mā′rў̆, she was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed among men shall be your son! And why is it that the mother of my Lord comes to visit me? Blessed is the woman who believed that the promise of the Lord to her shall be made true!"

Then Mā′rў̆ was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and broke out into a song of praise. She stayed with Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth for nearly three months, and then went again to her own home at Năz′a-rĕth.

As the angel had said, to the aged woman Ê-lĭş′a-bĕth was given a son. They were going to name him Zăch-a-rī′as, after his father. But his mother said, "No, his name shall be Jŏhn."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



THE ANGEL SPEAKING TO MARY

"Why," they said, "none of your family have ever been named Jŏhn."

They asked his father Zăch-a-rī′as, by signs, what name he wished to be given to the child. He asked for something to write upon; and when they brought it, he wrote, "His name is Jŏhn."

Then all at once the power to hear and to speak came back to Zăch-a-rī′as. He spoke, praising and blessing God; and he sang a song of thanks to God, in which he said:

THE WELL OF THE VIRGIN MĀ′RȲ, AT NĂZ′A-RĔTH.

"You, O child, shall be called a prophet of the Most High; to go before the Lord, and to make ready his ways."

When Jŏhn was growing up, they sent him out into the desert on the south of the land, and there he stayed until the time came for him to preach to the people, for this child became the great prophet Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst.

Story Two

THE MANGER OF BETHLEHEM

Matthew i : 18 to 25; Luke ii : 1 to 39.

SOON after the time when Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was born, Jō′ṣeph, the carpenter of Năz′a-rĕth, the husband of Mā′rȳ̆, had a dream. In his dream he saw an angel from the Lord standing beside him. The angel said to him:

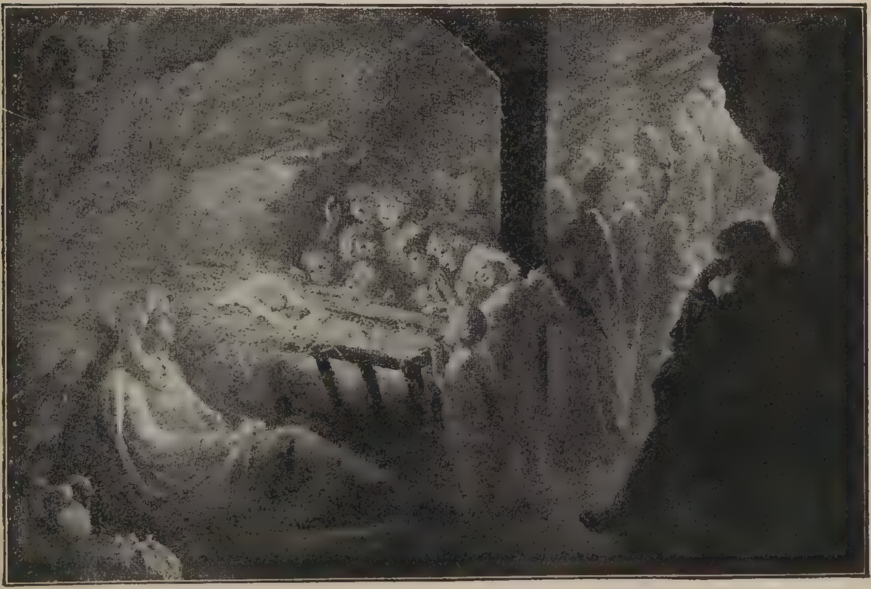
"Jō′ṣeph, I have come to tell you, that Mā′rȳ̆, the young woman whom you are to marry, will have a son, sent by the Lord God. You shall call his name Jē′ṣus, which means 'salvation,' because he shall save his people from their sins."

Jō′ṣeph knew from this that this coming child was to be the King of Ĭṣ′ra-el, of whom the prophets of the Old Testament had spoken so many times.

Soon after Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ̆ were married in Năz′a-rĕth, a command went forth from the emperor, Ạu-gŭs′tus Çæ′ṣar, through all the lands of the Rō′man empire, for all the people to go to the cities and towns from which their families had come, and there to have their names written down upon a list, for the emperor wished a list to be made of all the people under his rule. As both Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ̆ had come from the family of Dā′vid the king, they went together from Năz′a-rĕth to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, there to have their names written upon the list. For you remember that Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm in Jū-dē′ȧ, six miles south of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, was the place where Dā′vid was born, and where his father's family had lived for many years (~~see Story Four in Part Third~~).

It was a long journey from Năz′a-rĕth to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm; ~~down the mountains to the river Jôr′dan, then following the Jôr′dan almost to its end, and then climbing the mountains of Jū′dah to the town of Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm.~~ When Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ̆ came to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm they found the city full of people who, like themselves, had come to have their names enrolled ~~or written~~ upon the list. The inn ~~or hotel~~ was full, and there was no room for them; for no one but themselves knew that this young woman was soon to be the mother of the Lord of all the earth. The best that they could do was to go to a stable, where the cattle were kept. There the little baby was born, and was laid in a manger, where the cattle were fed.

On that night some shepherds were tending their sheep in a field near Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm. Suddenly a great light shone upon them, and they saw an angel of the Lord standing before them. They were filled with fear, as they saw how glorious the angel was. But the angel said to them:



JĒ′ṢUS IN THE MANGER, WITH ANGELS LOOKING ON.

"Be not afraid; for behold I bring you news of great joy, which shall be to all the people; for there is born to you this day in Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, the city of Dā′vid, a Saviour who is Chrīst the Lord, the anointed king. You may see him there; and may know him by this sign: He is a new-born baby, lying in a manger at the inn."

And then they saw that the air around and the sky above them were filled with angels, praising God and singing:

"Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace ~~among men in whom God is well pleased~~." [illegible] men.

While they looked with wonder, and listened, the angels went out of sight as suddenly as they had come. Then the shepherds said, one to another:

"Let us go at once to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, and see this wonderful thing that has come to pass, and which the Lord has made known to us."

Then as quickly as they could go to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, they went, and found Jō′ṣeph, the carpenter of Năz′a-rĕth, and his young wife Mā′rȳ, and the little baby lying in the manger. They told Mā′rȳ and Jō′ṣeph and others also, how they had seen the angels, and what they had heard about this baby. All who heard their story wondered at it; but Mā′rȳ, the mother of the child, said nothing. She thought over all these things, and silently kept them in her heart. After their visit, the shepherds went back to their flocks, praising God for the good news that he had sent to them.

When the little one was eight days old they gave him a name; and the name given was "Jē′ṣus," a word which means "salvation"; as the angel had told both Mā′rȳ and Jō′ṣeph that he should be named. So the very name of this child told what he should do for men; for he was to bring salvation to the world.

It was the law among the Jewṣ that after the first child was born in a family, he should be brought to the Temple; and there an offering should be made for him to the Lord, to show that this child was the Lord's. A rich man would offer a lamb, but a poor man might give a pair of young pigeons, for the sacrifice. On the day when Jē′ṣus was forty days old, Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ brought him to the Temple; and as Jō′ṣeph the carpenter was not a rich man, they gave for the child as an offering a pair of young pigeons.

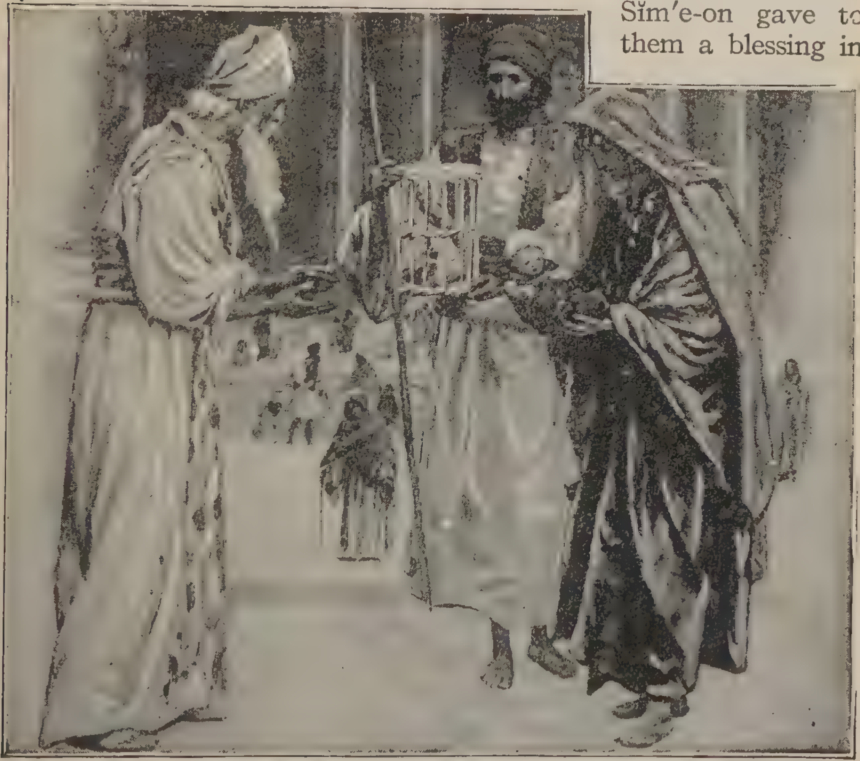
At that time there was living in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm a man of God named Sĭm′e-on. The Lord had spoken to Sĭm′e-on, and had said to him that he should not die until the Anointed King should come, whom they called "the Chrīst," for the word Chrīst means "anointed." On a certain day the Spirit of the Lord told Sĭm′e-on to go to the Temple. He went, and was there when Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ brought the little child Jē′ṣus. The Spirit of the Lord said to Sĭm′e-on:

"This little one is the promised Chrīst."

Then Sĭm′e-on took the baby in his arms and praised the Lord, and said:

"Now, O Lord, thou mayest let thy servant depart,
According to thy word, in peace.
For my eyes have seen thy salvation;
Which thou hast given before all the peoples
A light to give light to the nations,
And the glory of thy people Iş'ra-el."

When Jō'şeph and Mā'rў heard this, they wondered greatly. Sĭm'e-on gave to them a blessing in the name of the Lord; and he said to Mā'rў, "This little one shall cause many in Ĭş'ra-el to fall, and to rise again. Many shall speak against him; and sorrow like a sword shall pierce your heart also."



THE BABY JĒ'ŞUS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE.

You know how this came to pass afterward, when Mā'rў saw her son dying on the cross.

While Sĭm'e-on was speaking, a very old woman came in. Her name was Ăn′nȧ, and God spoke to her as to a prophet. She stayed almost all the time in the Temple, worshipping God day and night. She, too, saw, through the Spirit of the Lord, that this little child was Chrīst the Lord, and gave thanks to God for his grace.

Thus early in the life of Jē′şus God showed to a few that this little child should become the Saviour of his people and of the world.

Story Three

THE STAR AND THE WISE MEN

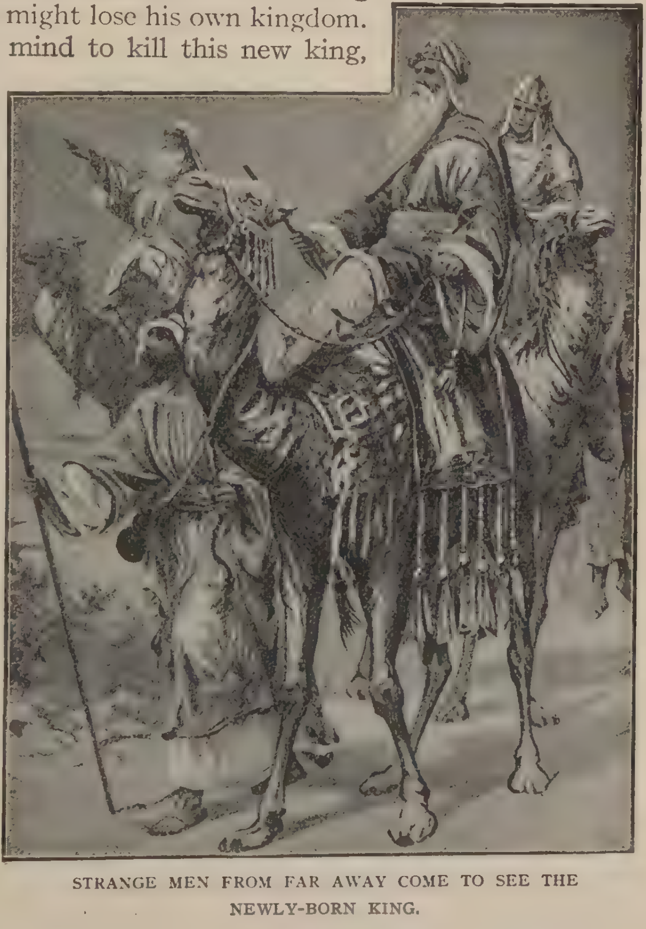
Matthew ii : 1 to 23.

FOR some time after Jē′şus was born, Jō′şeph and Mā′rȳ stayed with him inBĕth′lĕ-hĕm. The little baby was not kept long in the stable, sleeping in the manger; for after a few days they found room in a house; and there another visit was made to Jē′şus by strange men from a land far away.

In a country east of Jū-dē′ȧ, and many miles distant, were living some very wise men, who studied the stars. One night they saw a strange star shining in the sky; and in some way they learned that the coming of the star meant that a king was soon to be born in the land of Jū-dē′ȧ. These men felt a call of God to go to Jū-dē′ȧ, far to the west of their own home, and there to see this new-born king. They took a long journey, with camels and horses, and at last they came to the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, just at the time when Jē′şus was born at Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm. As soon as they were in Jū-dē′ȧ they supposed that every one would know all about the king; and they said:

"Where is he that is born the King of the Jewş? In the east we have seen his star; and we have come to worship him."

But no one of whom they asked had ever seen this king or had heard of him. The news of their coming was sent to Hĕr′od, the king, who was now a very old man. He ruled the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, as you know, under the emperor at Rome, Ạu-gŭs′tus Çæ′şar. (See Story One of this Part.) Hĕr′od was a very wicked man; and when he heard of some one born to be a king he feared that he might lose his own kingdom. He made up his mind to kill this new king, and thus to keep his own power. He sent for the priests and scribes, the men who studied and taught the books of the Old Testament, and asked them about this Chrīst for whom all the people were looking. He said, "Can you tell me where Chrīst, the King of Ĭş′ra-el, is to be born?" They looked at the books of the prophets, and then they said, "He is to be born in Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm of Jū-dē′ȧ; for thus it is written by the prophet, 'And thou, Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, in the land of Jū′dah, art not the least among the princes of Jū′dah; for out of thee shall come forth one who shall rule my people Ĭş′ra-el.'"



STRANGE MEN FROM FAR AWAY COME TO SEE THE NEWLY-BORN KING.

Then Hĕr′od sent for the wise men from the east, and met them alone, and found from them at what time the star was first seen. Then he said to them:

"Go to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, and there search carefully for the little child; and when you have found him bring me word again, so that I also may come and worship him."

Then the wise men went on their way toward Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, and suddenly they saw the star again shining upon the road before them. At this they were glad, and followed the star until it led them to the very house where the little child was. They came in, and there they saw the little one, with Mā′rȳ̆, its mother. They knew at once that this was the King, and they fell down on their faces and worshipped him as the Lord. Then they brought out gifts of gold and precious perfumes, frankincense and myrrh, which were used in offering sacrifices, and they gave them as presents to the royal child.

That night God sent a dream to the wise men, telling them not to go back to Hĕr′od, but to go home at once to their own land by another way. They obeyed the Lord, and found another road to their own country without passing through Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, where Hĕr′od was living. So Hĕr′od could not learn from these men who the child was that was born to be a king.

And very soon after these wise men had gone away the Lord sent another dream to Jō′ṣeph, the husband of Mā′ry̥. He saw an angel, who spoke to him, saying:

"Rise up quickly; take the little child and his mother, and go down to the land of Ē′ġy̆pt; for Hĕr′od will try to find the little child, to kill him."

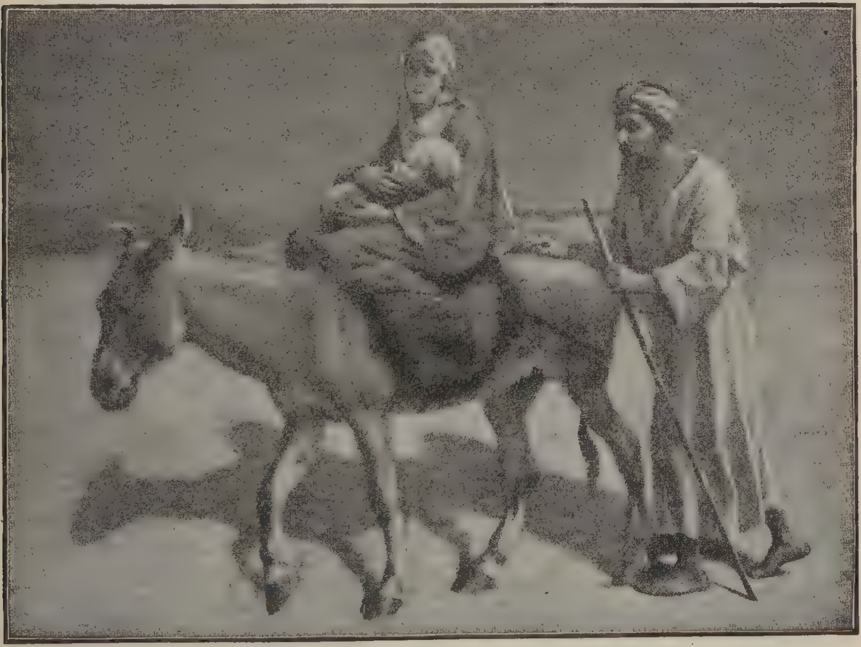
Then, at once, Jō′ṣeph rose up in the night, without waiting even for the morning. He took his wife and her baby, and quietly and quickly went with them down to Ē′ġy̆pt, which was on the southwest of Jū-dē′ȧ. There they all stayed in safety as long as the wicked King Hĕr′od lived, which was not many months.

King Hĕr′od waited for the wise men to come back to him from their visit to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm; but he soon found that they had gone to their home without bringing to him any word. Then Hĕr′od was very angry. He sent out his soldiers to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm. They came, and by the cruel king's command they seized all the little children in Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm who were three years old, or younger, and killed them all. What a cry went up to God from the mothers of

Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm as their children were torn from their arms and slain! But all this time the child Jē′şus, whom they were seeking, was safe with his mother in the land of Ē′ġy̆pt.

Soon after this King Hĕr′od died, a very old man, cruel to the last. Then the angel of the Lord came again and spoke to Jō′şeph in a dream, saying:

"You may now take the young child back to his own land, for the king who sought to kill him is dead."



THE FLIGHT INTO Ē′ĠY̆PT.

Then Jō′şeph took his wife and the little child Jē′şus, and started to go again to the land of Jū-dē′á. Perhaps it was his thought to go again to Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, the city of Dā′vid, and there bring up the child. But he heard that in that part of the land Är-chĕ-lā′us was now ruling, who was a son of Hĕr′od, and as wicked and cruel as his father. He feared to go under his rule, and instead took his wife and the child to Năz′a-rĕth, which had been his own home and that of Mā′ry̆ his wife, before the child was born. Năz′a-rĕth was in the part of the land called Găl′ĭ-lee, which at that time was ruled by another son of King Hĕr′od, a king named Hĕr′od Ăn′tĭ-păs. He was not a good man, but was not so cruel nor bloody as his wicked father had been.

So again Jō′şeph the carpenter, and Mā′ry̆ his wife, were living in Năz′a-rĕth. And there they stayed for many years while Jē′şus was growing up. Jē′şus was not the only child in their house, for other sons and daughters were given to them.

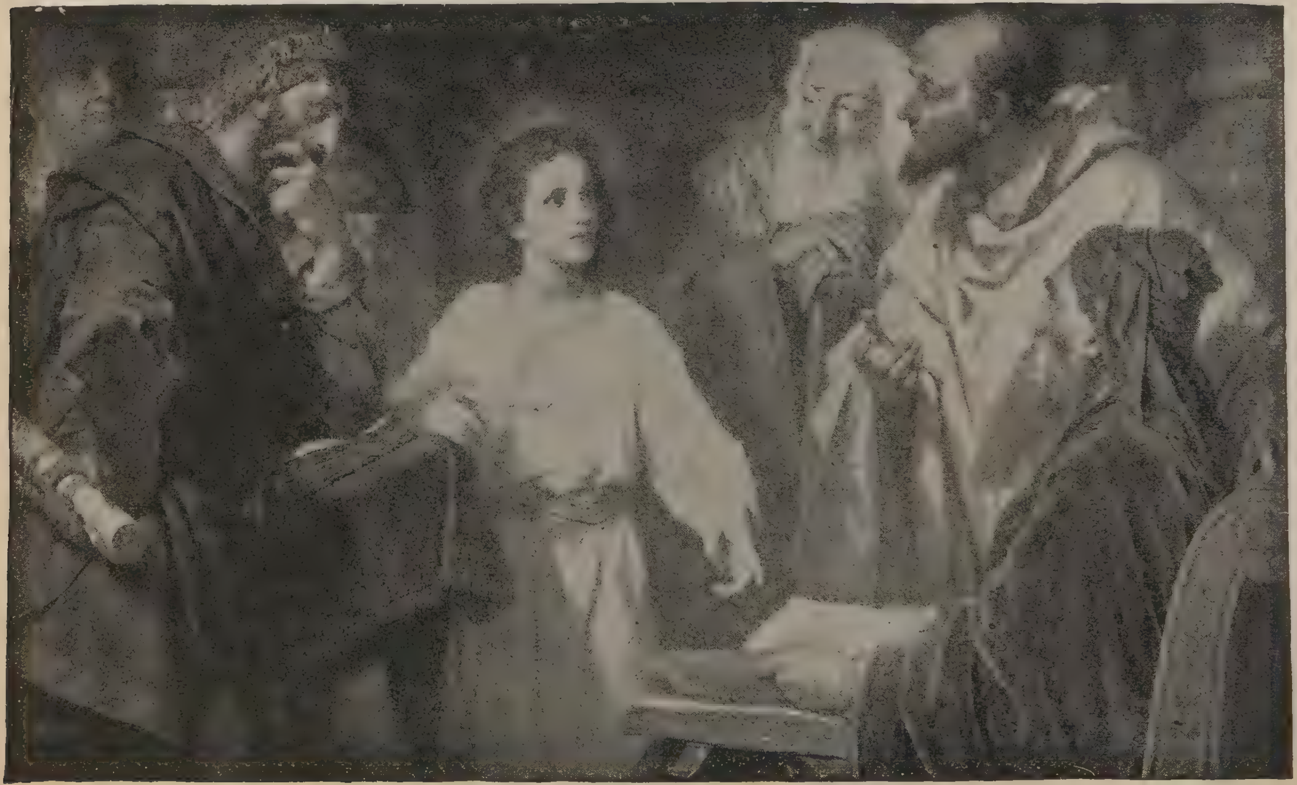
Story Four

THE BOY IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE

Luke ii : 40 to 52.

JĒ′ŞUS was brought to Năz′a-rĕth when he was a little child, not more than three years old; there he grew up as a boy and a young man; and there he lived until he was thirty years of age. We should like to know many things about his boyhood, but the Bible tells us very little. As Jō′şeph was a workingman, it is likely that he lived in a house with only one room, with no floor except the earth, no window except a hole in the wall, no pictures upon the walls, and neither bedstead, nor chair, nor looking-glass. They sat upon the floor, or upon cushions; they slept upon rolls of matting; and their meals were taken from a low table, not much larger than a stool.

Jē′şus may have learned to read at the village school, which was generally held in the house used for worship, called the "synagogue." The lessons were from rolls on which were written parts of the Old Testament; but Jē′şus never had a Bible of his own. From the time when he was a child he went with Jō′şeph to the worship in



JĒ'ṢUS IN THE TEMPLE WITH THE LEARNED RABBIS the synagogue twice every week. There they sat on the floor, and heard the Old Testament read and explained; while Mā'rȳ and the younger sisters of Jē'ṣus listened from a gallery behind a lattice-screen. The Jew'ĭsh boys of that time were taught to know almost the whole of the Old Testament by heart.

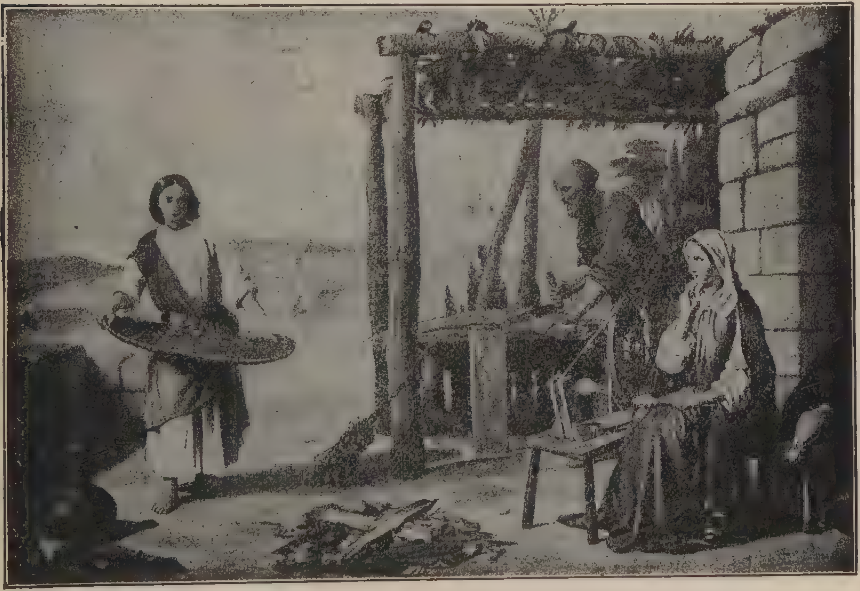
It was the custom for the Jewṣ from all parts of the land to go up to Jė-ru̦'sȧ-lĕm to worship at least once every year at the feast of the Passover, which was held in the spring. Some families also stayed to the feast of Pentecost, which was fifty days after Passover; and some went again in the fall to the feast of Tabernacles, when for a week all the families slept out of doors under roofs made of green twigs and bushes. When Jē'ṣus was a boy twelve years old he was taken up to the feast of the Passover, and then for the first time he saw the holy city Jė-ru̦'sȧ-lĕm and the Temple of the Lord on Mount Mȯ-rī'ah. Young as he was, his soul was stirred as he walked among the courts of the Temple, and saw the altar with its smoking sacrifice, the priests in their white robes, and the Lē'vītes with their silver trumpets. Though a boy, Jē'ṣus began to feel that he was the Son of God, and that this was his Father's house.

NĂZ'A-RĔTH.

His heart was so filled with the worship of the Temple, with the words of the scribes or teachers whom he heard in the courts, and with his own thoughts, that when it was time to go home to Năz'a-rĕth he stayed behind, held fast by his love for the house of the Lord. The company of people who were traveling together was large, and at first he was not missed. But when night came and the boy Jē'ṣus could not be found, his mother was alarmed.

The next day Jō′ṣeph and Mā′rȳ left their company and hastened back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. They did not at first think to go to the Temple. They sought him among their friends and kindred who were living in the city, but could not find him.

On the third day they went up to the Temple with heavy hearts, still looking for their boy. And there they found him, sitting in a company of the teachers of the law, listening to their words and asking them questions. Everybody who stood near was surprised to find how deep was the knowledge of this boy in the word of the Lord.



JĒ′ṢUS AS A BOY AT THE HOUSE OF HIS FATHER AND MOTHER.

His mother spoke to him a little sharply, for she felt that her son had not been thoughtful of his duty. She said:

"Child, why have you treated us in this way? Do you not know that your father and I have been looking for you with troubled hearts?"

"Why did you seek for me?" said Jē′ṣus. "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

They did not understand these words, but Mā′rȳ̆ thought often about them afterward, for she felt that her son was no common child and that his words had a deep meaning. Though Jē′ṣus was wise beyond his years, he obeyed Jō′ṣeph and his mother in all things. He went with them to Năz′a-rĕth, and lived contented with the plain life of their country home.

As the years went on Jē′ṣus grew from a boy to a young man. He grew, too, in knowledge, and in wisdom, and in the favor of God. He won the love of all who knew him, for there was something in his nature that drew all hearts, both young and old.

Jē′ṣus learned the trade of a carpenter or worker in wood with Jō′ṣeph; and when Jō′ṣeph died, while Jē′ṣus was still a young man, Jē′ṣus, as the oldest son, took up the care of his mother and his younger brothers and sisters. And so in the work of the carpenter's shop and the quiet life of a country village, and the worship of the synagogue, the years passed until Jē′ṣus was thirty years of age.

232

Story Five

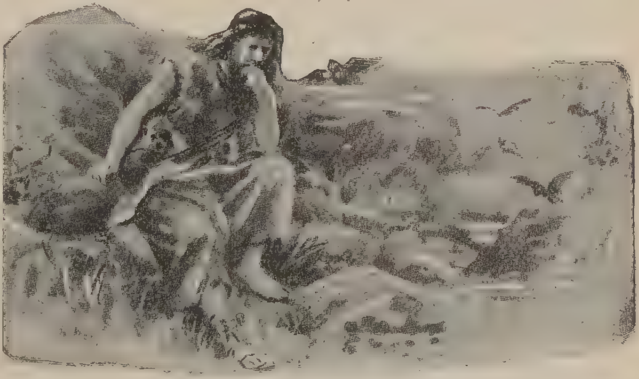
THE PROPHET IN THE WILDERNESS

Matthew iii : 1 to 17; Mark i : 1 to 11; Luke iii : 1 to 22.

WE come now to a time when Jē′ṣus, the son of Mā′rȳ̆, was a young man about thirty years of age. Jŏhn, the son of the old priest Zăch-a-rī′as, was six months older, but these two young men had never met, for one was in the north at Năz′a-rĕth, and the other was living in the desert on the south of Jū-dē′ȧ.

Suddenly the news went through all the land of Ĭṣ′ra-el that a prophet had risen up and was giving to the people the word of the Lord. It was more than four hundred years since God had sent a prophet to his people; and when it was known that again a man was speaking what God had told him, and not what he had learned by studying the old writings, a thrill went through the hearts of all the people. From all parts of the land, out of cities and villages, people poured forth to the wild region beside the river Jôr′dan, where the new prophet was preaching the word of the Lord.

This prophet was Jŏhn, the son of Zăch-a-rī′as. He lived in the wilderness, where he was alone with God and listened to God's voice. Then he spoke to the people the words that God had given to him. In his looks and dress Jŏhn was not like other men. His garment was made of rough cloth woven from camel's hair; around his waist was a girdle of skin; and the food which he ate was dried locusts and the wild honey from the trees. And this was his message, "Turn from sin to doing right, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and the King is soon to come." The people came to hear his words, and when they asked him, "What shall we do?" Jŏhn said to them, "He that has two coats, let him give to him that has none; and he that has food, more than he needs, let him give to him that is hungry."



JŎHN THE BĂP′TĬST IN THE WILDERNESS.

The men who gathered the taxes, and were called publicans, asked of Jŏhn, "Master, what shall we do?" And Jŏhn answered them, "Do not cheat the people, nor rob them, nor take more money than the law tells you to take from them."

And when the soldiers came to him, he said to them, "Do not harm any one, nor bring false charges against any; and be content with the wages that are paid to you."

There came to Jŏhn some people who were called Phăr′ĭ-seeş. These men made a great show of being good, and of worshipping often, and of keeping the law of Mō′ṣes. But in their hearts they were evil, and their goodness was not real. Jŏhn said to these men when he saw them, "O ye brood of vipers! Who has told you to escape from the wrath of God that is soon to come? Turn from your sins to God, and do right. And do not say to yourselves, 'Ā′bră-hăm is our father,' for God is able out of these stones to raise up children to Ā′bră-hăm."

When men who heard the words of Jŏhn wished to give themselves up to serve God and to do his will, Jŏhn baptized them in the river Jôr′dan, as a sign that their sins were washed away. And because of this he was called "Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst." Some of the people began to ask, "Is not this man the Chrīst whom God promised long ago to send to rule over the people?"

Jŏhn heard this, and he said, "I baptize you with water, but there is one coming after me who is greater than I. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He is so high above me that I am not worthy even to stoop down and untie the strings of his shoes. This mighty one who is coming shall sift out the wheat from the chaff among the people. The wheat he will gather into his garner, but the chaff he will burn up with fire that no man can put out."

Nearly all the people in the land came to hear Jŏhn in the wilderness, and were baptized by him. Among the last who came was Jē′ṣus, the young carpenter from Năz′a-rĕth. When Jŏhn saw Jē′ṣus something within told Jŏhn that here was one greater and holier than himself. He said to Jē′ṣus, "I have need to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me?"

Jē′ṣus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is fitting that I should do all things that are right."

Then Jŏhn baptized Jē′ṣus, as he had baptized others. And as Jē′ṣus came up out of the water, and was praying, Jŏhn saw above the head of Jē′ṣus the heavens opening, and the Holy Spirit coming down like a dove and lighting upon him. And Jŏhn heard from heaven a voice saying:

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

And then Jŏhn knew and told to others that this was the Son of God, the Chrīst whom God had promised to send to the people.

Story Six

JESUS IN THE DESERT, AND BESIDE THE RIVER

Matthew iv : 1 to 11; Mark i : 12, 13; Luke iv : 1 to 13; John i : 29 to 51.

FROM the earliest years of Jē′şus the Holy Spirit of God was with him, growing as he grew. And in the hour when he was baptized and the form of a dove was seen hovering over him, Jē′şus was filled with the Holy Spirit as no man before him had been filled, for he was the Son of God. At that hour he knew more fully than he had ever known before the work that he should do to save men. The Spirit of God sent Jē′şus into the desert, there to be for a time alone with God and to plan out his work for men.

So earnest was the thought of Jē′şus in the desert, so full was his union with God, that for forty days he never once ate anything, or felt any wish for food. But when the forty days were ended, then suddenly hunger came upon him, and he felt faint and starving, as any other man would feel who had fasted for so long a time.

At that moment Sā′tan, the evil spirit, came to Jē′şus, just as he comes to us, and put a thought into his mind. It was this thought:

"If you are the Son of God, you can do whatever you please, and can have whatever you wish. Why do you not command that these stones be turned into loaves of bread for you to eat?"

Jē′şus knew that he could do this, but he knew also that this power had been given to him, not for himself, but that he might help others. He said to the evil spirit, "It is written in God's book, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the evil spirit led Jē′şus to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, the holy city, and brought him to the top of a high tower on the Temple, and said to him, "Now show all the people that you are the Son of God by throwing yourself down to the ground. You know that it is written in the book of Psalms, 'He shall give his angels charge over thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.'"

But Jē′ṣus knew that this would not be right, for it would be done not to please God, but to show himself before men and as a trial of God's power, when God himself had not commanded it. He answered, "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'"

Again the evil spirit tried to lead Jē′ṣus into doing wrong, as he leads us all. He led him to the top of a high mountain, and caused a vision of all the kingdoms of the world and their glory to stand before the eyes of Jē′ṣus. Then he said, "All these shall be yours; you shall be the king of all the earth if you will only fall down and worship me."

Then Jē′ṣus said to him, "Leave me, Sā′tan, thou evil spirit! For it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'"

When Sā′tan found that Jē′ṣus would not listen to him, he left him; and then the angels of God came to Jē′ṣus in the desert and gave to him the food that he needed.

After this victory over the evil spirit, Jē′ṣus went again from the desert to the place at the river Jôr′dan where he had been baptized. It was near a city sometimes called Bĕth-ăb′a-rȧ, a word which means "a place of crossing," because it was one of the places where the river Jôr′dan was so shallow that the poeple could walk across it. The city was called also "Bĕth′a-nў̆ beyond Jôr′dan," so that it would not be mistaken for another Bĕth′a-nў̆ on the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveṣ, very near Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm.

There Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst saw Jē′ṣus coming toward him, and he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one of whom I spoke, saying, 'There is One coming after me who is greater than I.' This is the Son of God."

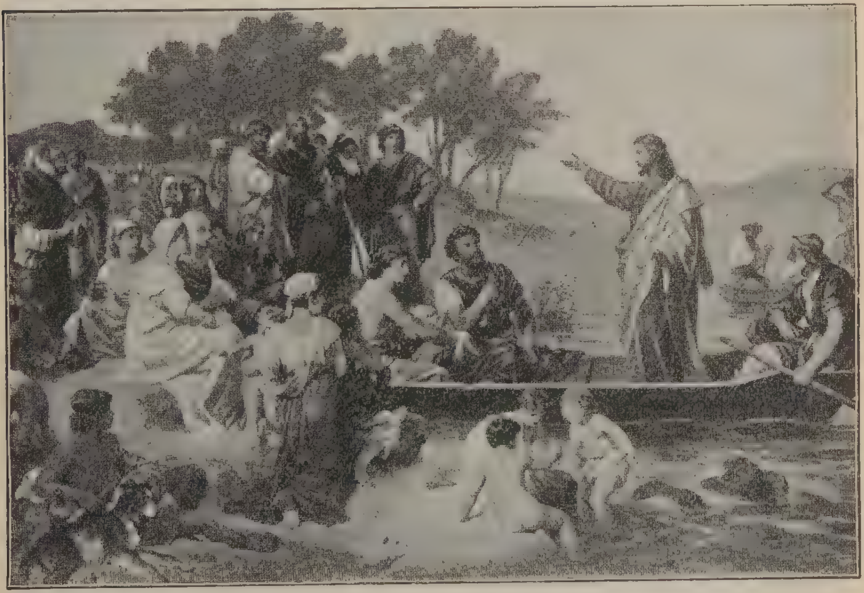
And again, the next morning, Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was standing with two young men, his followers. They were fishermen who had come from the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee to hear him. One was name Ăn′drew, and the other Jŏhn. Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst saw Jē′ṣus walking near by, and he said again, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

When the two young men heard this they left Jŏhn and went to speak with Jē′şus, although they had not known him before. Jē′şus saw that they were following him, and he said, "What is it that you wish from me?"

They said to him, "Master, we would like to know where you are staying, so that we can see you and talk with you."

Jē′şus said to them, "Come and see."

They went with Jē′şus and saw where he was staying, and stayed and talked with him, and listened to his words all the rest of that day, for it was about ten o'clock in the morning when they first saw Jē′şus. And these two young men went away from the meeting with Jē′şus, believing that Jē′şus was the Saviour and the King of Ĭş′ra-el. These two, Ăn′drew and Jŏhn, were the first two men, after Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst, to believe in Jē′şus.

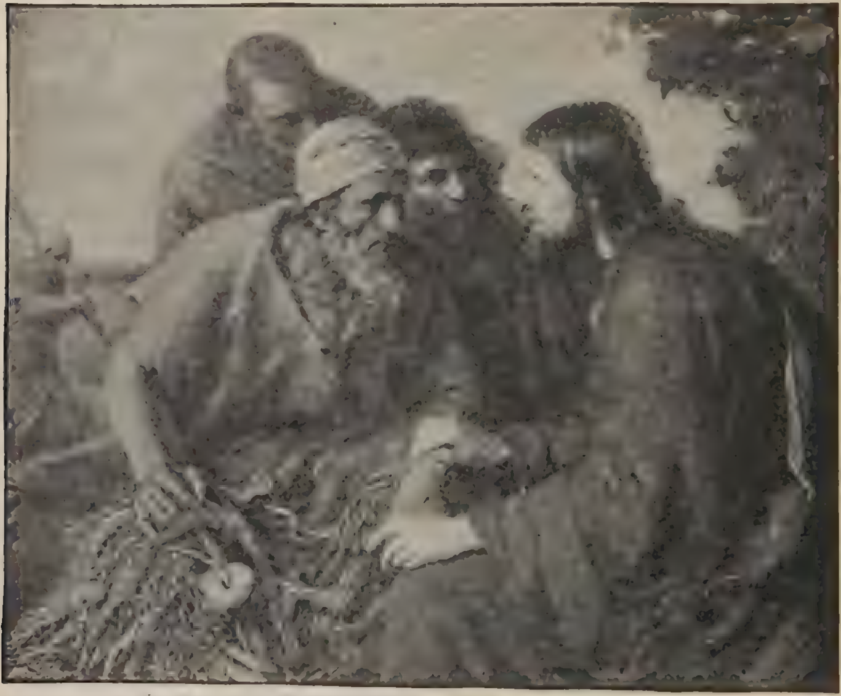


JĒ′ŞUS TEACHING BY THE SEA OF GĂL′Ĭ-LEE.

Each of these two men had a brother whom he wished might know Jē′şus. Ăn′drew's brother was named Sī′mon, and Jŏhn's brother was named Jāmeş. These four men were all fishermen, together upon the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee. Ăn′drew found his brother first, and he said to him, "We have found the Anointed One, the Chrīst, who is to be the King of Ĭş′ra-el."

And Ăn′drew brought his brother to meet Jē′ṣus. Jē′ṣus saw him coming, and without waiting to hear his name, he said, "Your name is Sī′mon, and you are the son of Jō′nas. But I will give you a new name. You shall be called 'The Rock.'"

The word "rock" in Hē′brew, the language of the Jewṣ, was "Çē′phas," and in Greek, the language in which the New Testament was written, it is "Petros," or Pē′tẽr. So from that time Sī′mon was called Sī′mon Pē′tẽr, that is, "Sī′mon the Rock." So now Jē′ṣus had three followers, Ăn′drew, Jŏhn, and Sī′mon Pē′tẽr. The next day as he was going back to Găl′i-lee, the part of the land where was his home, he met another man named Phĭl′ip, who had also come from Găl′i-lee. He said to Phĭl′ip, "Follow me."



JĒ′ṢUS MAKES PĒ′TẼR AND ĂN′DREW HIS DISCIPLES.

And Phĭl′ip went with Jē′ṣus as the fourth of his followers. Phĭl′ip found a friend, whose name was Nȧ-thăn′a-el. He came from a place in Găl′i-lee, called Cā′nȧ. Phĭl′ip said to Nȧ-thăn′a-el, "We have found the one of whom Mō′şes wrote in the law, and of whom the prophets spoke, the Anointed Chrīst. It is Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth."

Nå-thăn′a-el lived not many miles from Năz′a-rĕth, and he did not think that such a place as Năz′a-rĕth could have in it one so great as the Chrīst, whom the Jewş looked for as their king. He said to Phĭl′ĭp, rather in scorn, "Can there any good thing come out of Năz′a-rĕth?"

Phĭl′ĭp knew that if Nå-thăn′a-el could only meet Jē′şus and hear his words he would believe in him, as the others believed. He said to Nå-thăn′a-el, "Come and see him for yourself."

And he brought Nå-thăn′a-el to Jē′şus. As soon as Jē′şus saw him he said, "Here is an Ĭş′ra-el-īte indeed, a man without evil."

Nå-thăn′a-el was surprised at this, and he said to Jē′şus, "Master, how did you know me?"

"Before Phĭl′ĭp called you, when you were standing under the fig-tree, I saw you," said Jē′şus.

At this Nå-thăn′a-el wondered all the more, for he saw that Jē′şus knew what no man could know. He said, "Master, thou art the Son of God! Thou art the King of Ĭş′ra-el!"

Jē′şus said to Nå-thăn′a-el, "Do you believe in me because I tell you that I saw you under the fig-tree? You shall see greater things than these. The time shall come when you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God going up and coming down through me, the Son of God."

Jē′şus had now five followers. These men and others who walked with him, and listened to his words, were called "disciples," a word which means "learners."

Story Seven

THE WATER JARS AT THE WEDDING FEAST

John ii : 1, to iii : 21.

A FEW days after Jē′şus met his first followers or disciples at the river Jôr′dan, he came with these men to a town in Găl′ĭ-lee called Cā′nȧ, to be present at a wedding. In those lands a feast was always held at a wedding, and often the friends of those who were married stayed several days, eating and drinking together.

The mother of Jē′şus was at this wedding as a friend of the family, for Năz′a-rĕth, where she lived, was quite near to Cā′nȧ. Before the wedding feast was over all the wine had been used, and there was no more for the guests to drink. The mother of Jē′şus knew that her son had power to do whatever he chose, and she said to him, "They have no wine."

Jē′şus said to her, "O woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come."

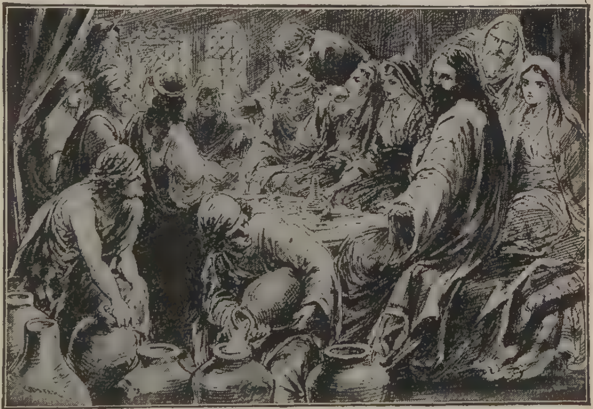
But his mother knew that Jē′şus would in some way help the people in their need; and she said to the servants who were waiting at the table, "Whatever he tells you to do, be sure to do it."

In the dining hall were standing six large stone jars, each about as large as a barrel, holding twenty-five gallons. These jars held water for washing, as the Jewş washed their hands before every meal, and washed their feet as often as they came from walking in the street, since they wore no shoes, but only sandals. Jē′şus said to the servants, "Fill the water jars with water."

The servants obeyed Jē′şus, and filled the jars up to the brim. Then Jē′şus spoke to them again, and said, "Now draw out some of the water, and take it to the ruler of the feast."

They drew out water from the jars, and saw that it had been turned into wine. The ruler did not know from what place the wine had come, but he said to the young man who had just been married, the bridegroom, "At a feast everybody gives his best wine at the beginning, and afterward, when his guests have drunk freely, he brings on wine that is not so good; but you have kept the good wine until now."

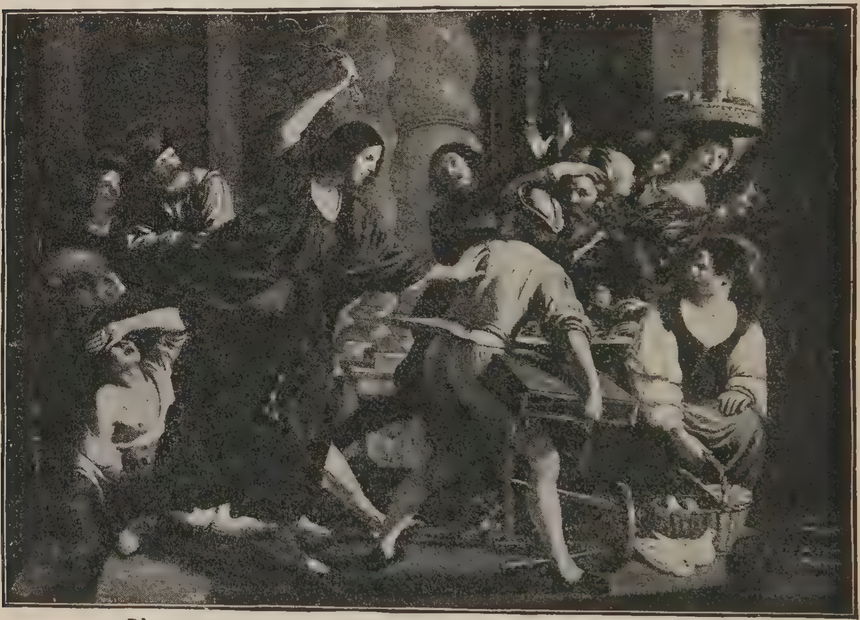
This was the first time that Jē′ṣus used the power that God had given him, to do what no other man could do. Such works as these were called "miracles," and Jē′ṣus did them as signs of his power as the Son of God. When the disciples saw this miracle they believed in Jē′ṣus more fully than before. After this Jē′ṣus went with his mother and his younger brothers to a place called Cȧ-pēr′-na-ŭm, on the shore of the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee. But they stayed there only a few days, for the feast of the Passover was near, and Jē′ṣus went up to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to attend it. You remember that the feast of the Passover was held every year to keep in mind how God had led the people of Ĭṣ′ra-el out of Ē′ġȳpt long before.


JĒ′ṢUS AT THE WEDDING FEAST.

When Jē′ṣus came to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm he found in the courts of the Temple men who were selling oxen and sheep and doves for the sacrifices, and other men sitting at tables changing the money of Jewṣ who came from other lands into the money of Jū-dē′ȧ. All this made the courts around the Temple seem like a market, and not a place for the worship of God.

Jē′ṣus picked up some cord, and made from it a little whip. With it he began to drive out of the Temple all the buyers and sellers. He was but one, and they were many; but such power was in his look that they ran before him. He drove the men, and the sheep and the oxen; he overturned the tables, and threw on the floor the money; and to those who were selling the doves he said, "Take these things away; make not my Father's house a house for selling and buying!"

These acts of Jē′ṣus were not pleasing to the rulers of the Jewṣ, for many of them were getting rich by this selling of sacrifices and changing of money. Some of the rulers came to Jē′ṣus, and said to him, "What right have you to come here and do such things as these? What sign can you show that God has given to you power to rule in this place?"


JĒ′ṢUS DRIVES THE BUYERS AND SELLERS FROM THE TEMPLE.

Jē′ṣus said to them, "I will give you a sign. Destroy this house of God, and in three days I will raise it up."

Then said the Jewṣ, "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and it is not finished yet. Will you raise it up in three days?"

But Jē′ṣus did not mean that Temple on Mount Mȯ-rī′ah. He was speaking of himself; for in him God was dwelling as in a temple, and he meant that when they should put him to death, he would rise again in three days. Afterward, when Jē′ṣus had died and risen again, his followers, the disciples, thought of what he had said, and understood these words.

While Jē′şus was in Jē-ru′sā-lĕm one of the rulers of the Jewş, a man named Nĭc-o-dē′mus, came to see him. He came in the night, perhaps because he was afraid to be seen coming in the daytime. He said to Jē′şus, "Master, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no man can do these wonderful things that you do unless God is with him."

Jē′şus said to Nĭc-o-dē′mus, "I say to you in truth, that unless a man is born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nĭc-o-dē′mus did not know that this meant that to be saved we must have new hearts given to us by the Lord. He said, "Why, how can a man be born twice? How can one be born again after he has grown up?"

Jē′şus said to him, "I tell you of a truth, that unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

By this he meant that we must be baptized, and that God must put his Spirit in us, if we are to become God's children. Jē′şus said also, "As Mō′şeş lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that every one who believes in him may have everlasting life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn (that is to judge) the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

We have already read how Mō′şeş lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, and how that serpent pointed to Chrīst.

Story Eight

THE STRANGER AT THE WELL

Matthew xiv : 3 to 5; Mark vi : 17 to 20; Luke iii : 19, 20; John iii : 22, to iv : 42.

WHILE Jē′şus was teaching in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and in the country places near it, Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was still preaching and baptizing. But already the people were leaving Jŏhn and going to hear Jē′şus. Some of the followers of Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst were not pleased as they saw that fewer people came to their master, and that the crowds were seeking Jē′şus. But Jŏhn said to them, "I told you that I am not the Chrīst, but that I am sent before him. Jē′şus is the Chrīst, the King. He must grow greater, while I must grow less, and I am glad that it is so."

Soon after this Hĕr′od Ăn′tĭ-păs, the king of the province or land of Găl′ĭ-lee, put Jŏhn in prison. Hĕr′od had taken for his wife a woman named Hė-ro′dĭ-as, who had left her husband to live with Hĕr′od, which was very wicked. Jŏhn sent word to Hĕr′od that it was not right for him to have this woman as his wife. These words of Jŏhn made Hė-ro′dĭ-as very angry. She hated Jŏhn, and tried to kill him. Hĕr′od himself did not hate Jŏhn so greatly, for he knew that Jŏhn had spoken the truth. But he was weak, and yielded to his wife Hė-ro′dĭ-as. To please her he sent Jŏhn the Băp-tĭst to a lonely prison among the mountains east of the Dead Sea, for the land in that region, as well as Găl′ĭ-lee, was under Hĕr′od's rule. There in prison Hĕr′od hoped to keep Jŏhn safe from the hate of his wife Hė-ro′dĭ-as.

Soon after Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was thrown into prison, Jē′şus left the country near Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, with his disciples, and went toward Găl′ĭ-lee, the province in the north. Between Jū-dē′ȧ in the south and Găl′ĭ-lee in the north lay the land of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, where the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş lived, who hated the Jewş. They worshipped the Lord as the Jewş worshipped him, but they had their own temple and their own priests. And they had their own Bible, which was only the five books of Mō′ṣeṣ, for they would not read the other books of the Old Testament. The Jewṣ and the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanṣ would scarcely ever speak to each other, so great was the hate between them.

When Jewṣ went from Găl′ĭ-lee to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, or from Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm to Găl′ĭ-lee, they would not pass through Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, but went down the mountains to the river Jôrdan, and walked beside the river, in order to go around Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ. But Jē′ṣus, when he would go from Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm to Găl′ĭ-lee, walked over the mountains, straight through Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ. One morning, while he was on his journey, he stopped to rest beside an old well at the foot of Mount Ḡĕr′ĭ-zĭm, not far from the city of Shē′chem, but nearer to a little village that was called Sȳ′chär. This well had been dug by Jā′cob, the great father or ancestor of the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes, many hundreds of years before. It was an old well then in the days of Jē′suṣ, and it is much older now, for the same well may be seen in that place still. Even now travelers may have a drink from Jā′cob's well.

THE WOMAN OF SȦ-MĀ′RĬȦ SEES JĒ′ṢUS AT THE WELL.

It was early in the morning, about sunrise, when Jē′şus was sitting by Jā′cob's well. He was very tired, for he had walked a long journey; he was hungry, and his disciples had gone to the village near at hand to buy food. He was thirsty, too; and as he looked into the well he could see the water, a hundred feet below, but he had no rope with which to let down a cup or a jar and to draw up some water to drink.

Just at this moment a Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tan woman came to the well, with her water-jar upon her head, and her rope in her hand. Jē′şus looked at her, and in one glance read her soul, and saw all her life. He knew that Jewş did not often speak to Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş, but he said to her, "Please to give me a drink."

The woman saw from his looks and his dress that he was a Jew, and she said to him, "How is it that you, who are a Jew, ask drink of me, a Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tan woman?"

Jē′şus answered her, "If you knew what God's free gift is, and if you knew who it is that says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would ask him to give you living water, and he would give it to you."

There was something in the words and the looks of Jē′şus which made the woman feel that he was not a common man. She said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where can you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jā′cob, who drank from this well, and who gave it to us?"

"Whoever drinks of this water," said Jē′şus, "shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

"Sir," said the woman, "give me some of this water of yours, so that I will not thirst any more, nor come all the way to this well."

Jē′şus looked at the woman, and said to her, "Go home, and bring your husband, and come here."

"I have no husband," answered the woman.

"Yes," said Jē′şus, "you have spoken the truth. You have no husband. But you have had five husbands, and the man whom you now have is not your husband."

The woman was filled with wonder as she heard this. She saw that there was a man who knew what a stranger could not know. She felt that God had spoken to him, and she said, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet of God. Tell me, whether our people or the Jews̹ are right. Our fathers have worshipped on this mountain. The Jews̹ say that Jė-ru̩'sȧ-lĕm is the place where men should go to worship. Now, which of these is the right place?"

"Woman, believe me," said Jē'ṣus, "there is coming a time when men shall worship God in other places besides on this mountain and in Jė-ru̩'sȧ-lĕm. The time is near; it has even now come, when the true worshippers everywhere shall pray to God in spirit and in truth; for God himself is a Spirit."

The woman said, "I know that the Anointed One is coming, the Chrīst. When he comes he will teach us all things."

Jē'ṣus said to her, "I that speak to you now am he, the Chrīst!"

Just at this time the disciples of Jē'ṣus came back from the village. They wondered to see Jē'ṣus talking with this Sȧ'măr'ĭ-tan woman, but they said nothing.

The woman had come to draw water, but in her interest in this wonderful stranger she forgot her errand. Leaving her water jar, she ran back to her village, and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything that I have done in all my life! Is not this man the Chrīst whom we are looking for?"

When the woman was gone away, the disciples urged Jē'ṣus to eat some of the food which they had brought. A little while before Jē'ṣus had been hungry, but now he had forgotten his own needs of food and drink. He said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing of, the food of the soul; and that food is to do the will of God, and to work for him. Do you say to me that there are four months before the harvest? I tell you to look on the fields, and see them white for the harvest. You shall reap, and shall have a rich reward, gathering fruit to everlasting life."

Jē'ṣus meant that as this woman, bad though she may have been before, was now ready to hear his words; so they would find the hearts of men everywhere, like a field of ripe grain, ready to be won and to be saved.

Soon the woman came back to the well with many of her people. They asked Jē'ṣus to come to their town, and to stay there and teach them. He went with them, and stayed there two days, teaching the people, who were Sȧ-măr'ĭ-tanṣ. And many of the people in that place believed in Jē'ṣus, and said, "We have heard for ourselves; now we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."

Story Nine

THE STORY OF A BOY IN CAPERNAUM, AND OF A RIOT IN NAZARETH

John iv : 46 to 54; Luke iv : 16 to 31.

FROM Sȳ′chär, the village near Jā′cob's well, Jē′şus went northward into Găl′ĭ-lee, to Cā′nȧ, the place where he had made the water into wine. The news that Jē′şus had come back from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and was again in Găl′ĭ-lee, went through all that part of the land, and everybody wished to see the prophet who had wrought such wonders.

There was one man living in Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, a town beside the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee, who heard with great joy that Jē′şus was again at Cā′nȧ. He was a man of high rank, a nobleman at the court of King Hĕr′od; but he was in deep trouble over his son, who was very sick, and in danger of dying. This nobleman went up the mountains in great haste from Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm to Cā′nȧ, to see Jē′şus. He rode all night, and in the morning, when he found Jē′şus, he begged him to come down to Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm and cure his son. Jē′şus said to the man, "You people will not believe on me as the Saviour, unless you continually see signs and wonders."

"O my lord," said the father, "do come down quickly, or my child will die."

"You may go home," said Jē′şus, "for your son will live."

The man believed the words of Jē′şus, and went home, but he did not hurry, nor did he ask Jē′şus to go with him. The next morning, as he was going down the mountains, his servants met him, and said, "Master, your son is living, and is better."

"At what hour did he begin to grow better?" asked the nobleman.

"It was yesterday, at seven o'clock in the morning, when the fever left him," they answered.

That was the very hour when Jē′ṣus had said to him, "Your son will live." And after that the nobleman believed in Jē′ṣus, and so did all who were living in his house.

Jē′ṣus had come to Găl′ĭ-lee to preach to the people, and to tell them of his gospel. He thought that he would begin his preaching in the town of Năz′a-rĕth, where he had lived so many years, where his brothers and sisters were living still, and where all the people had known him. He loved the men who had played with him when he and they were boys together, and he longed to give them the first news of his gospel.

THE WELL OF THE WISE MEN, NEAR BĔTH′LĔ-HĔM.

So Jē′ṣus went to Năz′a-rĕth; and, as on the Sabbath-days he had always worshipped in the synagogue, he went to that place once more. He was no longer the carpenter, but the teacher, the prophet, of whom all the land were talking, and the synagogue was filled with people eager to hear him, and, especially, hoping to see him do some wonderful works. Seated on the floor before him were men who had known him since he was a little boy, and perhaps some of his own sisters were looking down from the gallery behind the lattice-screen.

Jē′ṣus stood up, to show that he wished to read from the Scriptures, and the officer who had the care of the books handed him the roll of the prophet Ī-ṣā′iah. Jē′ṣus turned to the sixty-first chapter, and from it read:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor.
> He hath sent me to proclaim freedom to the captives,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty those that are bruised,
> To proclaim the year of God's grace to men.

When Jē′ṣus had read these words he rolled up the book and gave it again to the keeper of the rolls, and sat down; for in the synagogue a man stood up to read the Bible, and sat down to speak to the people. He began by saying:

"This day this word of the Lord has come to pass before you."

And then he showed how he had been sent to preach to the poor, to set the captives free, to give sight to the blind, to comfort those in trouble, and to tell to men the news of God's grace. At first the people listened with the deepest interest, and they were touched with the kind and tender words that he spoke.

But soon they began to whisper among themselves. One said, "Why should this carpenter try to teach us?" And another, "This man is no teacher! He is only the son of Jō′ṣeph! We know his brothers and his sisters are living here." And some began to say, "Why does he not do here the wonders that they say he has done in other places? We want to see some of his miracles!"

Jē′ṣus knew their thoughts, and he said, "I know that you will say to me, 'Let us see a miracle like that on the nobleman's son in Cȧ-pĕr′na-ŭm.' Of a truth, I say to you, 'No prophet has honor among his own people.'

"You remember what is told of Ē̂-lī′jah the prophet; when the heavens were shut up, and there was no rain for three years and six months. There were many widows in the land of Ĭṣ′ra-el at that time, but Ē̂-lī′jah was not sent by the Lord to any one of them. The Lord sent him out of the land to Zăr′e-phăth, a town near Zī′dŏn, to a widow there; and there he wrought his miracles.

"And in the time of Ē̂-lī′shȧ the prophet, there were many lepers in Ĭṣ′ra-el that Ē̂-lī′shȧ might have cured; but the only leper that Ē̂-lī′shȧ made well was Nā′a-man the Sȳr′ĭ-an."

All this made the people in the synagogue very angry; for they cared only to see some wonderful work, and not to hear the words of Jē′ş̧us. They would not listen to him; they leaped up from their seats upon the floor; they laid hold of Jē′şus, and dragged him out doors. They then took him up to the top of the hill above the city, and they would have thrown him down to his death. But Jē′şus, by the power of God, slipped quietly out of their hands and went away, for the time for him to die had not yet come.

Very sadly Jē′şus went away from Năz′a-rĕth, for he had longed to bring God's blessings to his own people. He walked down the mountains to the city of Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, by the seashore, and there on the Sabbath-days he taught the people in the synagogues.

You can read the story of Ḗ-lī′jah the prophet and the woman of Zăr′e-phăth, and the story of Ḗ-lī′shȧ healing Nā′a-man the Sy̆r′ĭ-an. These were the stories of which Jē′şus spoke to the people in the synagogue at Năz′a-rĕth.

JĀ′COB'S WELL AS IT IS NOW.

Story Ten

A NET FULL OF FISHES

Matthew iv : 18 to 22; Mark i : 16 to 34; Luke iv : 33, to v : 11.

YOU remember that when Jē′şus was by the river Jôr′dan, a few young men came to him as followers, or disciples. We have read of these men—Ăn′drew and Jŏhn, Pē′tẽr and Phĭl′ĭp, and Nȧ-thăn′ȧ-el. While Jē′şus was teaching near Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, these men stayed with Jē′şus; but when he came to Găl′ĭ-lee, they went again to their homes and their work, for most of them were fishermen from the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee.

One morning, soon after Jē′şus came to Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, he went out of the city, by the sea, followed by a great throng of people, who had come together to see him and to hear him. On the shore were lying two fishing boats, one of which belonged to Sī′mon and Ăn′drew, the other to Jāmeş and Jŏhn and their father Zĕb′e′dee. The men themselves were not in the boats, but were washing their nets near by.

Jē′şus stepped into the boat that belonged to Sī′mon Pē′tẽr and his brother Ăn′drew, and asked them to push it out a little into the lake, so that he could talk to the people from it without being crowded too closely. They pushed it out; and then Jē′şus sat in the boat, and spoke to the people as they stood upon the beach. After he had finished speaking to the people, and had sent them away, he said to Sī′mon Pē′tẽr:

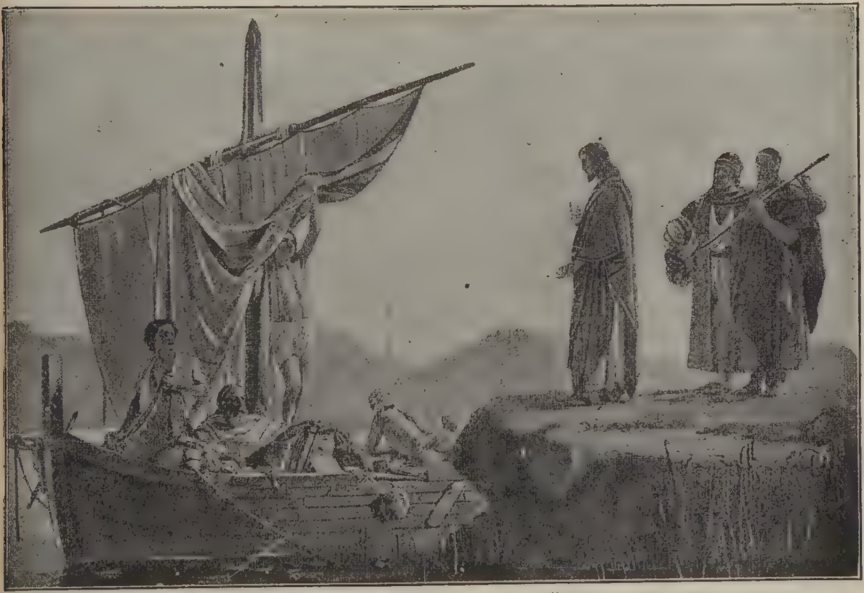
"Put out into the deep water, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

"Master," said Sī′mon, "we have been fishing all night, and have caught nothing; but if it is your will, I will let down the net again."

They did as Jē′şus bade them; and now the net caught so many fishes, that Sī′mon and Ăn′drew could not pull it up, and it was in danger of breaking. They made signs to the two brothers, Jāmeş and Jŏhn, who were in the other boat, for them to come and help them. They came, and lifted the net, and poured out the fish. There were so many of them that both the boats were filled, and began to sink.

When Sī′mon Pē′tēr saw this, he was struck with wonder, and felt that it was by the power of God. He fell down at the feet of Jē′şus, saying, "O Lord, I am full of sin, and am not worthy of all this! Leave me, O Lord."

But Jē′şus said to Sī′-mon, and to the others, "Fear not; but follow me, and I will make you from this time fishers of men."



JĒ′ŞUS CALLS JĀMEŞ AND JŎHN.

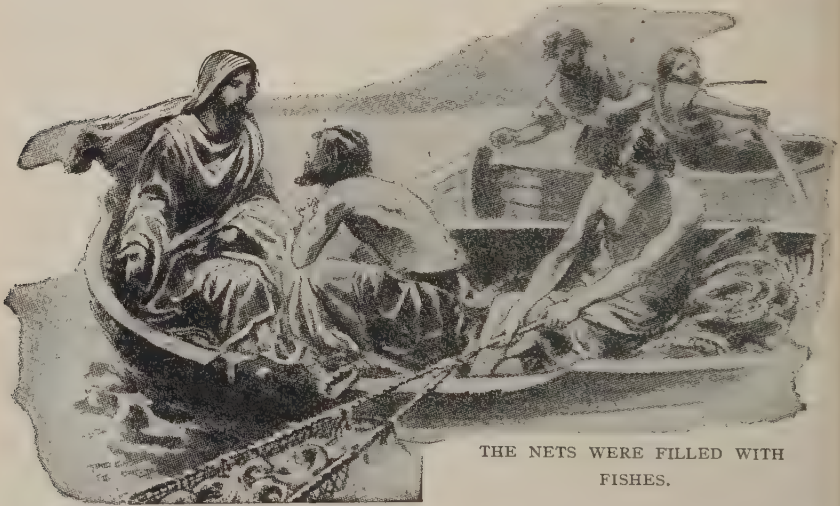
From that time these four men, Sī′mon and Ăn′drew, Jāmeş and Jŏhn, gave up their nets and their work, and walked with Jē′şus as his disciples.

On the Sabbath after this Jē′şus and his disciples went together to the synagogue, and spoke to the people. They listened to him and were surprised at his teaching; for while the scribes always repeated what the other scribes had said before, Jē′şus never spoke of what the men of old time had taught; but spoke in his own name, and by his own power, saying, "I say unto you," as one who had the right to speak. Men felt that Jē'ṣus was speaking to them as the voice of God.

On one Sabbath, while Jē'ṣus was preaching, a man came into the synagogue, who had in him an evil spirit; for sometimes evil spirits came into men, and lived in them, and spoke out from them. The evil spirit in this man cried out, saying:

"Let us alone, thou Jē'ṣus of Năz'a-rěth! What have we to do with thee? Hast thou come to destroy us? I know thee; and I know who thou art, the Holy One of God!" Then Jē'ṣus spoke to the evil spirit in the man, "Be still; and come out of this man!"

Then the evil spirit threw the man down, and seemed as if he would tear him apart; but he came out, and left the man lying on the ground, without harm.

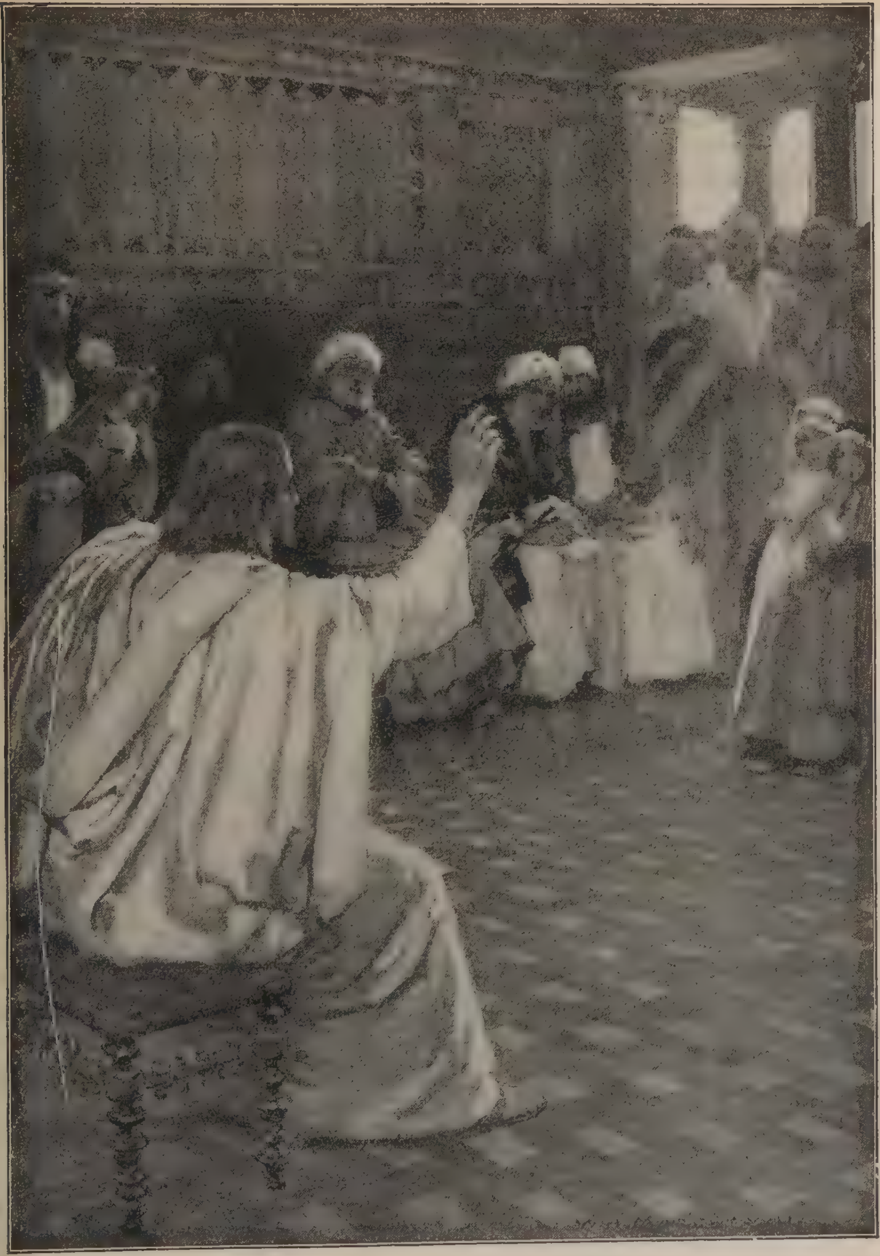


THE NETS WERE FILLED WITH FISHES.

Then wonder fell upon all the people. They were filled with fear, and said, "What mighty word is this? This man speaks even to the evil spirits, and they obey him!"

After the meeting in the synagogue Jē'ṣus went into the house where Sī'mon Pē'tẽr lived. There he saw lying upon a bed the mother of Sī'mon's wife, who was very ill with a burning fever. He stood over her, and touched her hand. At once the fever left her; she rose up from her bed and waited upon them.

At sunset the Sabbath-day was over; and then they brought



JĒ'ṢUS TEACHING AT NĂZ'A-RĔTH

to Jē′şus from all parts of the city those that were sick, and some that had evil spirits in them. Jē′şus laid his hands upon the sick and they became well; he drove out the evil spirits by a word, and would not allow them to speak.

Story Eleven

THE LEPER, AND THE MAN LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF

Matthew viii : 2 to 4; ix : 2 to 8; Mark i : 40 to 45; ii : 1 to 12; Luke v : 12 to 26.

AFTER the great day of teaching and healing, of which we read in the last Story, Jē′şus lay down to rest in the house of Sī′mon Pē′tẽr. But very early the next morning, before it was light, he rose up, and went out of the house to a place where he could be alone, and there for a long time he prayed to God. Soon Sī′mon and the other disciples missed him, and sought for him until they found him. They said, "Everybody is looking for you; come back to the city."

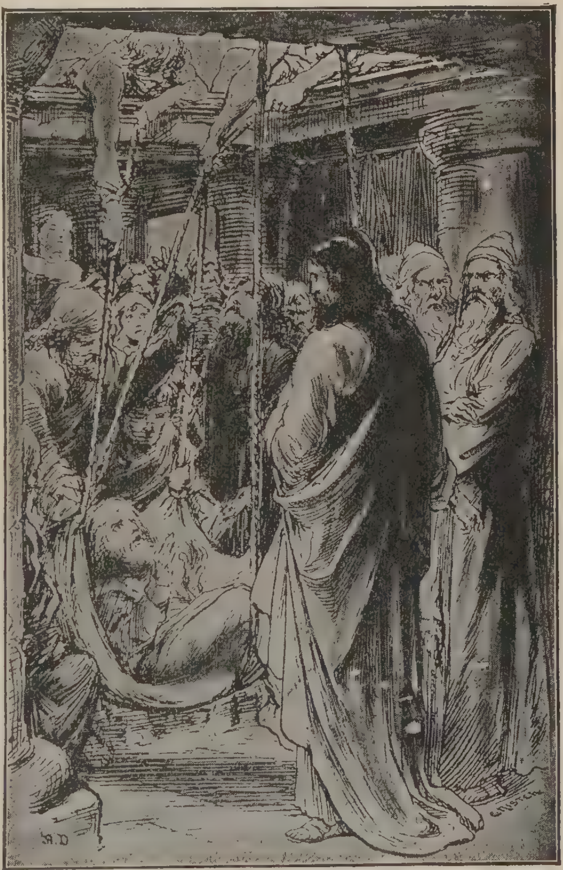
But Jē′şus said, "No, I cannot stay in Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm. There are other places where I must preach the kingdom of God, for this is the work to which I am sent."

And Jē′şus went out through all the towns in that part of Găl′ĭ-lee, preaching in the synagogues, and healing all kinds of sickness, and casting out the evil spirits. His disciples were with him, and great crowds followed him from all the land. They came to hear his wonderful words and to see his wonderful works.

While he was on this journey of preaching in Găl′ĭ-lee a leper came to him. You remember, from the story of Nā′a-man the

Sy̆r′ĭ-an, what a terrible disease leprosy was, and still is, in those lands, and that no man could cure the leper.

This poor leper fell down before the feet of Jē′ṣus, and cried out, "O Lord, if you are willing, I know that you can make me well and clean!" Jē′ṣus was full of pity for this poor man. He reached out his hand and touched him, and said, "I am willing; be clean!" And in a moment all the scales of leprosy fell away, his skin became pure, and the leper stood up a well man. Jē′ṣus said to him, "Do not tell any one; but go to the priests, and offer the gift that the law commands, and let them see that you have been cured."



THE MAN LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF.

Jē′ṣus said this because he knew that if the man should tell every one whom he met how he had been cured, such crowds would come to him for healing that he would find no time for preaching the word of God; and preaching God's word, and not healing the sick, was the great work of Jē′ṣus.

But this leper who had been healed did not obey the command of Jē′ṣus. He could not keep still, and told everybody whom he knew that Jē̦sus, the great prophet, had taken away his leprosy. And it came to pass as Jē′ș̦us had expected; such great crowds gathered in all the towns and villages to see Jē′ș̦us, and to ask him to heal their sick, that Jē′ș̦us could not enter the cities to preach the gospel. He went out to the fields and the open country, and there the people followed him in great throngs.

After a time Jē′ș̦us came again to Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, which was now his home. As soon as the people heard that he was there they came in great crowds to see him and to hear him. They filled the house, and the courtyard inside its walls, and even the streets around it, while Jē′ș̦us sat in the open court of the house and taught them. It was the spring-time and warm, and a roof had been placed over the court as a shelter from the sun.

In the crowd listening to Jē′ș̦us were not only his friends, but some that were his enemies, Phăr′ĭ-seeș, men making a great show of serving God, but wicked in their hearts, and scribes who taught the law, but were jealous of this new teacher, whose words were so far above theirs. These men were watching to find some evil in Jē′ș̦us, so that they might lead the people away from him.

While Jē′ș̦us was teaching, and these men were listening, the roof was suddenly taken away above their heads. They looked up, and saw that a man was being let down in a bed by four men on the walls above.

This man had a sickness called palsy, which made his limbs shake all the time, and kept him helpless, so that he could neither walk nor stand. He was so eager to come to Jē′ș̦us that these men, finding that they could not carry him through the crowd, had lifted him up to the top of the house, and had opened the roof, and were now letting him down in his bed before Jē′ș̦us.

This showed that they believed in Jē′ș̦us, without any doubt whether he could cure this man from his palsy. Jē′ș̦us said to the man, "My son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven!"

The enemies of Jē′ș̦us who were sitting near heard these words, and they thought in their own minds, though they did not speak it aloud, "What wicked things this man speaks! He claims to forgive sins! Who except God himself has power to say, 'Your sins are forgiven'?"

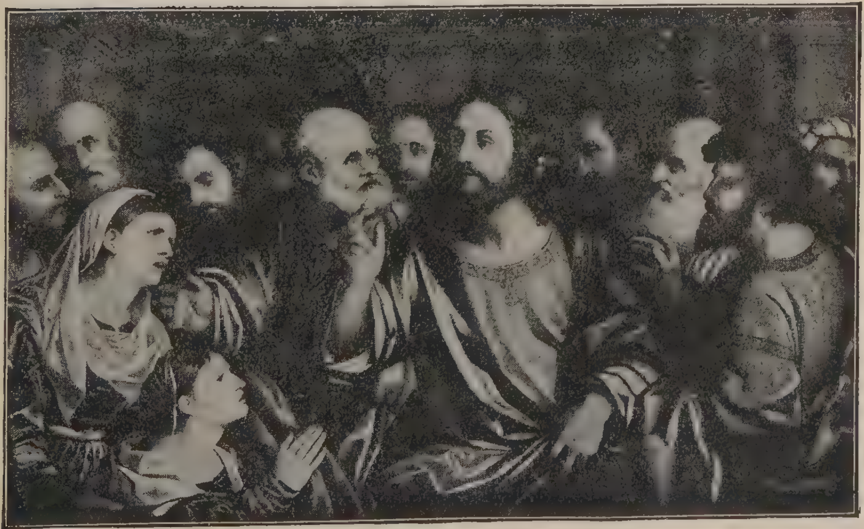
Jē′ș̦us knew their thoughts, for he knew all things, and he said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? Which is the easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? But I will show you that while I am on earth as the Son of Man, I have the power to forgive sins."

Then he spoke to the palsied man on his couch before them, "Rise up, take up your bed, and go to your house!"

At once a new life and power came to the palsied man. He stood upon his feet, rolled up the bed on which he had been lying helpless, placed it on his shoulders and walked out through the crowd, which opened to make a way for him. The man went, strong and well, to his own house, praising God as he walked.

By this Jē'şus had shown that, as the Son of God, he had the right to forgive the sins of men.

These enemies of Jē'şus could say nothing, but in their hearts they hated him more than ever, for they saw that the people believed on Jē'şus. They praised the Lord God, and felt fear toward one who could do such mighty works, and they said, "We have seen strange things to-day!"



JĒ'ŞUS HEARS THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

Story Twelve

THE CRIPPLE AT THE POOL, AND THE WITHERED HAND IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Matthew xii : 1 to 14; Mark ii : 23, to iii : 6; Luke vi : 1 to 11; John v : 1 to 18.

WHILE Jē′şus was living in Cȧ-pĕr′na-ŭm the time for the Passover of the Jewş drew near, and Jē′şus went up to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to keep the feast, as he had kept it a year before. You remember that at that time he drove out of the Temple the people that were buying and selling. The feast which Jē′şus now kept was the second Passover in the three years while Jē′şus was preaching.

While Jē′şus was at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm he saw in the city, not far from the Temple, a pool called Bė-thĕş′dȧ. Beside this pool were five arches or porches; and in these porches were lying a great crowd of sick and blind, helpless and crippled people. At certain times the water rose and bubbled up in the pool; and it was believed that at these times it had power to cure diseases. We know that there are springs of water that will cure many kinds of sickness, and this may have been one of these.

On the Sabbath-day Jē′şus walked among these poor helpless and suffering people, who were waiting for the water to rise. Jē′şus looked at one man, and though no one told him, he knew that this man had been a cripple, without power to walk, for almost forty years. He said to this man, "Do you wish to be made well?"

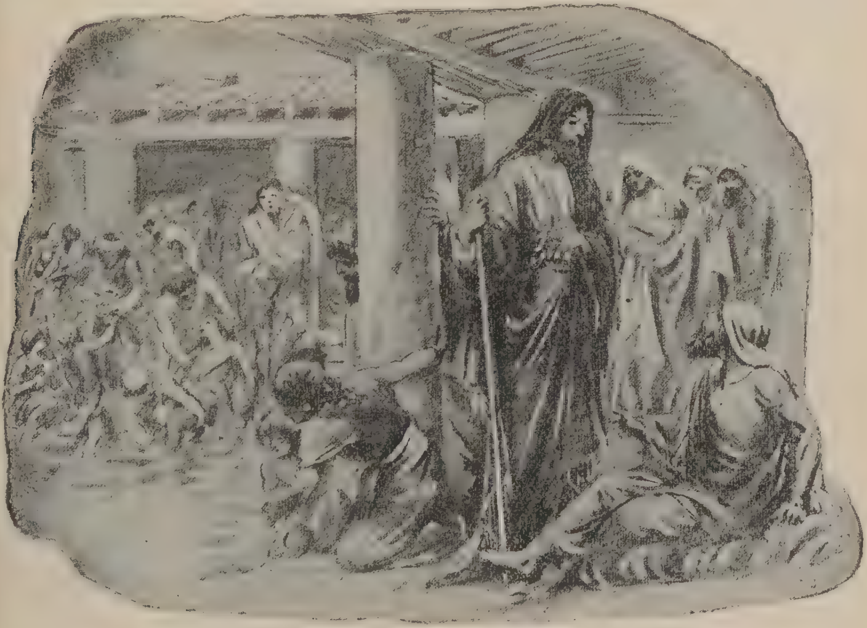
The man did not know who Jē′şus was. He answered, "Sir, I cannot walk; and I have no man to carry me down to the water when it rises in the pool; but while I am trying to crawl down, others crowd in before me, and the place is full, so that I cannot reach the water and be cured."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

Jē′ṣus said to the man, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk!"

The cripple had never heard words like these before; but as they were spoken he felt a new power shoot through his limbs. He rose up, took the piece of matting on which he had been lying, rolled it up, and walked away toward his home!

Some one who saw him said, "Stop; this is the Sabbath-day, and it is against the law for you to carry your bed!"



JĒ′ṢUS HEALS THE CRIPPLE AT THE POOL.

The man did not lay down his load. He only said, "The one who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'"

The Jewṣ said, "Who was this man that told you to carry your bed on the Sabbath-day?"

The man who had been cured did not know who it was that had cured him; for there were many standing near, and Jē′ṣus, after healing the man, had walked away without being noticed. But after this Jē′ṣus met this man in the Temple, and said to him, "You have been made well; do not sin against God any more, or something worse than disease will come upon you."

The man went away from the Temple, and told the Jewş that it was Jē′şus who had made him well. The Jewş were very angry at Jē′şus because he had cured this man on the Sabbath. But Jē′şus said to them, "My Father works on all days to do good to men, and I work also."

These words made the Jewş ready to kill Jē′şus, not only because, as they said, he had broken the Sabbath, but because he had spoken of God as his Father, as though he were the Son of God. He was indeed the Son of God, although they would not believe it.

After the feast of the Passover Jē′şus went again to Că-pĕr′-na-ŭm in Găl′ĭ-lee, beside the lake. One Sabbath-day he was walking with his disciples through the fields of ripe grain; and the disciples, as they walked, picked the heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands, blew away the chaff, and ate the kernels of wheat. The law of the Jewş allowed any one walking through the fields to eat what he could gather with his hands, though it did not allow him to take any of the grain home. But the Phăr′ĭ-seeş, whose goodness was all for show, said that it was a breaking of the Sabbath to pick the ears and to rub them in the hands on the Sabbath-day. They said to Jē′şus, "Do you see how your disciples are doing on the Sabbath what is against the law?"

Jē′şus answered them, "Have you never read what Dā′vid did when he was hungry? He went into the house of God, and took the holy bread from the table, and ate some of it, and gave some to his men, though the law said that only the priests might eat this bread. And do you not know that on the Sabbath-day the priests in the Temple do work, in killing and offering the sacrifices, yet they do no wrong? I say to you that one greater than the Temple is here; for the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath."

Jē′şus meant them to understand that he was the Son of God, that God lived in him even more fully than he lived in the Temple, and that he spoke as Lord of all.

We have read this, about Dā′vid and the holy bread in the Tabernacle, of which Jē′şus spoke to the Jewş, in Story Seven of Part Third.

On another Sabbath-day Jē′şus went to the synagogue. A man was there whose hand was withered. The Phăr′ĭ-seeş watched Jē′şus, to see whether on the Sabbath-day he would make his hand well. Not that they felt for the poor man; they only wished to chance to speak evil against Jē′ṣus. Jēṣus knew all their thoughts, and he spoke to the man, "Rise up, and stand where all can see you!"

The man rose up from the mat where he had been sitting, and stood before all the people. Then Jē′ṣus looked around upon them sternly, being sad because their hearts were so hard and cruel, and he said, "Is it against the law to do good on the Sabbath-day, or to do evil? to heal a man, or to try and kill a man, as you are doing? If any one of you owns a sheep, and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? Is not a man worth more than a sheep? I say unto you that it is right to do good to men on the Sabbath-day."

JĒ′ṢUS AND HIS DISCIPLES IN THE FIELD OF GRAIN.

And then, turning to the man, he said, "Stretch out your hand!"

The man obeyed the word of Jē′ṣus, and held out his hand. At once it became strong and well, like his other hand. Many of the people were glad as they saw this; but the Phăr′ĭ-seeṣ, who hated Jē′ṣus, went out very angry; and they met together to find some plan for putting Jē′ṣus to death.

Story Thirteen

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

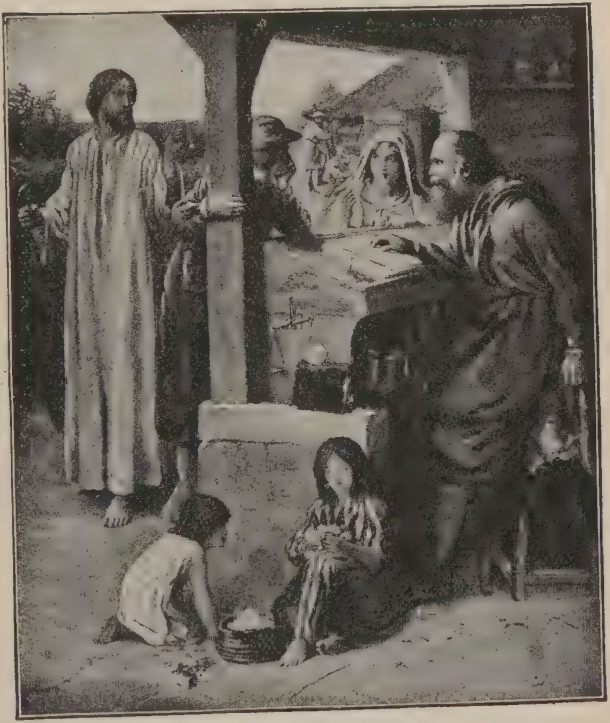
Matthew ix : 9 to 13; v to viii; Mark ii : 13 to 17; Luke v : 27 to 32; vi : 12 to 49.

AMONG the Jewş there was one class of men hated and despised by the people more than any other. That was "the publicans." These were the men who took from the people the tax which the Rō′man rulers had laid upon the land. Many of these publicans were selfish, grasping, and cruel. They robbed the people, taking more than was right. Some of them were honest men, dealing fairly, and taking no more for the tax than was needful; but because so many were wicked, all the publicans were hated alike; and they were called "sinners" by the people.

One day, when Jē′şus was going out of Cȧ-pĕr′na-ŭm to the seaside, followed by a great crowd of people, he passed a publican or tax-gatherer, who was seated at his table taking money from the people who came to pay their taxes. This man was named Măt′thew or Lē′vī, for many Jewş had two names. Jē′şus could look into the hearts of men, and he saw that Măt′thew was one who might help him as one of his disciples. He looked upon Măt′thew, and said, "Follow me!"

At once the publican rose up from his table, and left it to go with Jē′şus. All the people wondered as they saw one of the hated publicans among the disciples, with Pē′tĕr, and Jŏhn, and the rest. But Jē′şus knew that Măt′thew would long afterward do a work that would bless the world forever. It was this same Măt′thew the publican, who many years after this wrote "The Gospel according to Măt′thew," the book which tells us so much about Jē′şus, and more than any other book gives us the words that Jē′şus spoke to the people. Jē′şus chose Măt′thew, knowing that he would write this book. A little while after Jē′şus called him Măt′thew made a great feast for Jē′şus at his house; and to the feast he invited many publicans, and others whom the Jewş called sinners. The Phăr′ĭ-seeş saw Jē′şus sitting among these people, and they said with scorn to his disciples, "Why does your Master sit at the table with publicans and sinners?"

Jē′şus heard of what these men had said, and he said, "Those that are well do not need a doctor to cure them, but those that are sick do need one. I go to these people because they know that they are sinners and need to be saved. I came not to call those who think themselves to be good, but those who wish to be made better."



JĒ′ŞUS CALLS MĂT′THEW.

One evening Jē′şus went alone to a mountain not far from Cȧ-pẽr′-na-ŭm. A crowd of people and his disciples followed him; but Jē′şus left them all, and went up to the top of the mountain, where he could be alone. There he stayed all night, praying to God, his Father and our Father. In the morning, out of all his followers, he chose twelve men who should walk with him, and listen to his words, so that they might be able to teach others in turn. Some of these men he had called before; but now he called them again, and others with them. They were called "The Twelve," or "the disciples"; and after Jē′ṣus went to heaven they were called "The Apostles," a word which means "those who were sent out," because Jē′ṣus sent them out to preach the gospel to the world.

The names of the twelve disciples, or apostles were these: Sī′mon Pē′tẽr, and his brother Ăn′drew; Jāmeṣ and Jŏhn, the two sons of Zĕb′e-dee; Phĭl′ĭp of Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ, and Nȧ-thăn′a-el, who was also called Bär-thŏl′o-mew, a name which means "the son of Tholmai"; Thŏm′as, who was also called Dĭd′ȳ-mŭs, a name which means "a twin," and Măt′thew, the publican or tax-gatherer; another Jāmeṣ, the son of Ăl′phae′us, who was called "Jāmeṣ the Less," to keep his name apart from the first Jāmeṣ, the brother of Jŏhn, and Lĕb-be′us, who was also called Thăd′de-us. Lĕb-be′us was also called Jū′das, but he was a different man from another Jū′das, whose name is always given last. The eleventh name was another Sī′mon, who was called "the Cā′năan-īte," or "Sī′mon Zė-lō′tēṣ;" and the last name was Jū′das Ĭs-căr′ĭ-ot, who was afterward the traitor. We know very little about most of these men, but some of them in later days did a great work. Sī′mon Pē′tẽr was a leader among them, and Jŏhn, long after those times, when he was a very old man, wrote one of the most wonderful books in all the world, "The Gospel according to Jŏhn," the fourth among the gospels.

In the sight of all the people who had come to hear Jē′ṣus, Jē′ṣus called these twelve men to stand by his side. Then, on the mountain, he preached to these disciples and to the great company of people. Jē′ṣus sat down, the disciples stood beside him, and the great crowd of people stood in front, while Jē′ṣus spoke. What he said on that day is called "The Sermon on the Mount." Măt′thew wrote it down, and you can read it in his gospel, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters. Jē′ṣus began with these words to his disciples:

> **Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**
>
> **Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**
>
> **Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.**
>
> **Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.**
>
> **Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.**
>
> **Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.**
>
> **Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.**

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Here are some more of the words of Jē′ṣus in this sermon:

I say unto you, Do not be anxious for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the birds of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin:

And yet I say unto you, That even Sŏl′o-mon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gĕn′tīles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no anxious thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

This is what Jē′ṣus said about prayer to our Heavenly Father:

> Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you:
>
> For every one that asketh receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
>
> Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?
>
> Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?
>
> If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!
>
> Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.

And this was the end of the sermon:

> Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
>
> And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.
>
> And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
>
> And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Story Fourteen

THE CAPTAIN'S SERVANT, THE WIDOW'S SON, AND THE WOMAN WHO WAS A SINNER

Matthew viii : 5 to 13; Luke vii : 1 to 17; 36 to 50.

THERE was at Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm an officer of the Rō′man army, a man who had under him a company of a hundred men. They called him "a centurion," a word which means "having a hundred," but we should call him "a captain." This man was not a Jew, but was what the Jewş called "a Gĕn′tīle," "a foreigner," a name which the Jewş gave to all people outside of their own race. All the world, except the Jewş themselves, were Gĕn′tīleş.

This Rō′man centurion was a good man, and he loved the Jewş, because through them he had heard of God, and had learned how to worship God. Out of his love for the Jewş he had built for them, with his own money, a synagogue, which may have been the very synagogue in which Jē′şus taught on the Sabbath-days.

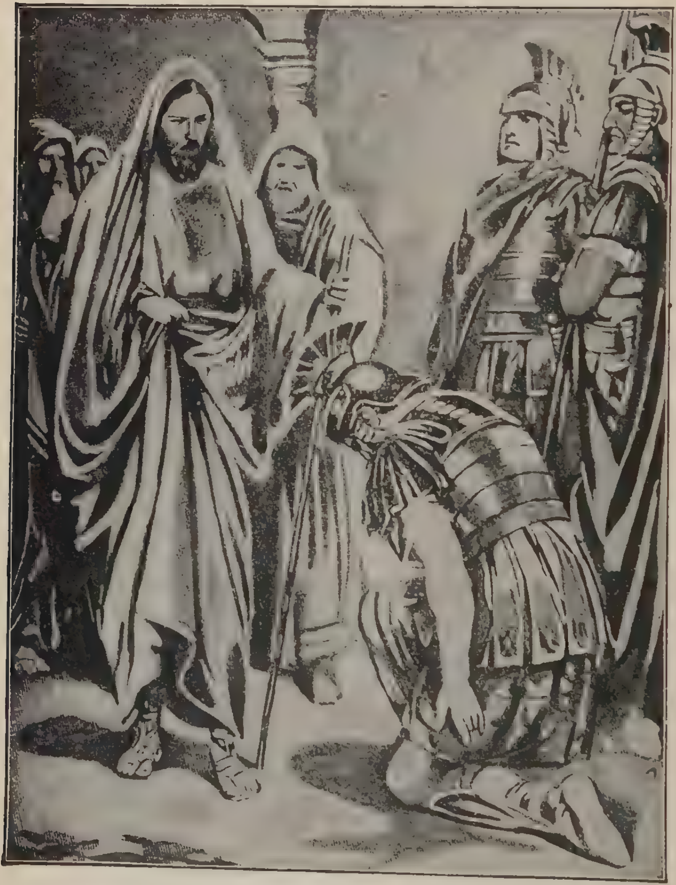
The centurion had a young servant, a boy, whom he loved greatly; and this boy was very sick with a palsy, and near to death. The centurion had heard that Jē′şus could cure those who were sick; and he asked the chief men of the synagogue, who were called its "elders," to go to Jē′şus, and ask him to come and cure his young servant.

The elders spoke to Jē′şus just as he came again to Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, after the Sermon on the Mount. They asked Jē′şus to go with them to the centurion's house; and they said, "He is a worthy man, and it is fitting that you should help him, for though a Gĕn′tīle, he loves our people, and he has built for us our synagogue."

Then Jē′şus said, "I will go and heal him."

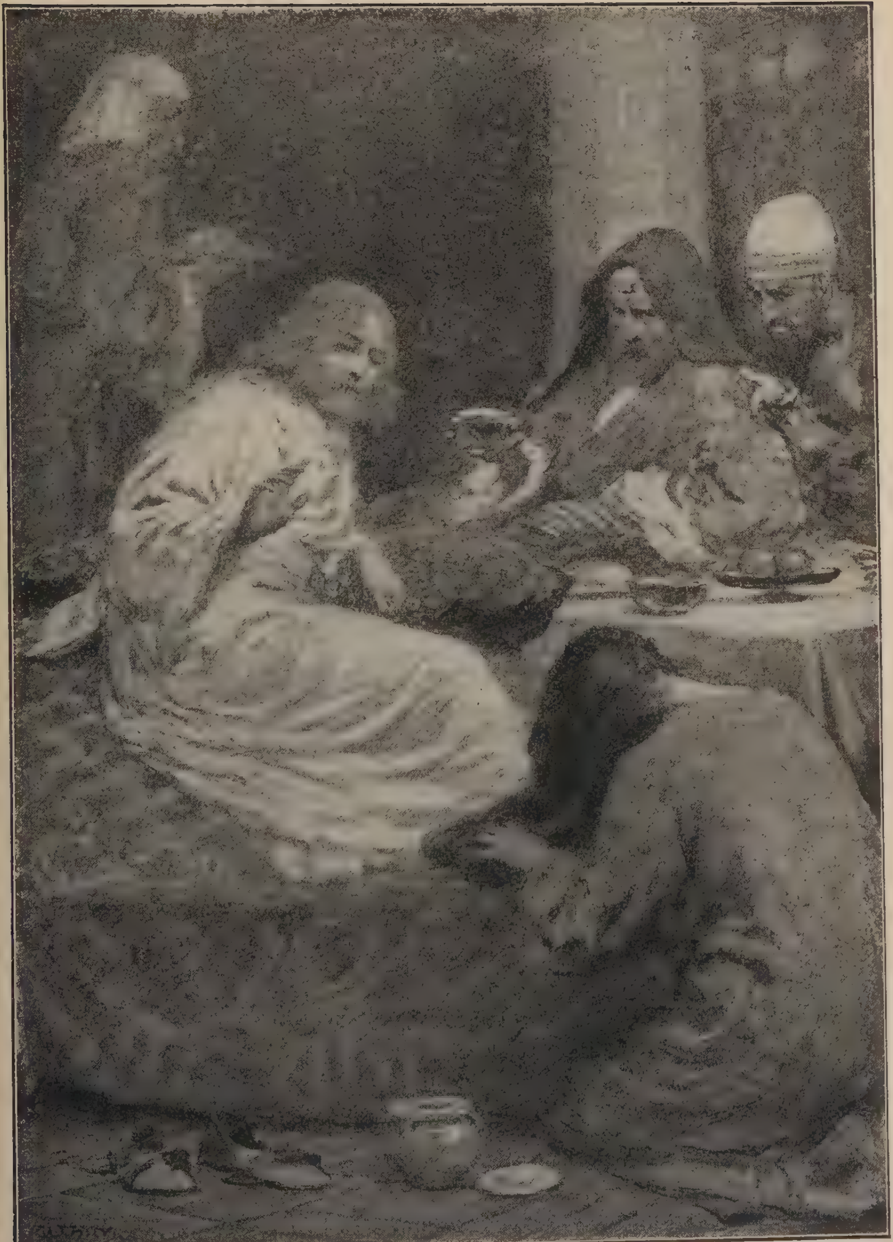
But while he was on his way, and with him were the elders, and his disciples, and a great crowd of people, who hoped to see the work of healing, the centurion sent some other friends to Jē'şus with this message:

"Lord, do not take the trouble to come to my house; for I am not worthy that one so high as thou art should come under my roof; and I did not think that I was worthy to go and speak to thee. But speak only a word where you are, and my servant shall be made well. For I also am a man under rule, and I have soldiers under me, and I say to one; 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it. You, too, have power to speak and to be obeyed. Speak the word, and my servant will be cured."



A CENTURION COMES TO JĒ'ŞUS.

When Jē'şus heard this he wondered at this man's faith. He turned to the people following him, and said, "In truth I say to you, I have not found such faith as this in all Ĭş'ra-el!"



THE WOMAN WASHING THE FEET OF JĒ′ṢUS IN THE HOUSE OF SĪ′MON.

Then he spoke to the friends of the centurion who had brought word from him:

"Go and say to this man, As you have believed in me, so shall it be done to you."

Then those who had been sent went again to the centurion's house, and found that in that very hour his servant had been made perfectly well.

On the day after this, Jē′ṣus, with his disciples and many people, went out from Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm, and turned southward, and came to a city called Nā′in. Just as Jē′ṣus and his disciples came near to the gate of the city they were met by a company who were carrying out the body of a dead man to be buried. He was a young man, and the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. All the people felt sad for this woman who had lost her only son.

When the Lord Jē′ṣus saw the mother in her grief, he pitied her, and said, "Do not weep."

He drew near, and touched the frame on which they were carrying the body, wrapped round and round with long strips of linen. The bearers looked with wonder on this stranger, and set down the frame with its body, and stood still. Standing beside the body, Jē′ṣus said, "Young man, I say to you, Rise up!"

And in a moment the young man sat up and began to speak. Jē′ṣus gave him to his mother, who now saw that her son, who had been dead, was alive again.

A great fear came upon all who had looked upon this wonderful work of Jē′ṣus. They praised God, and said, "God has indeed come to his people, and has given us a great prophet!"

And the news that Jē′ṣus had raised a dead man to life again went through all the land.

While Jē′ṣus was on this journey through southern Găl′ĭ-lee, at one place a Phăr′ĭ-see, whose name was Sī′mon, asked Jē′ṣus to come and dine at his house. This man did not believe in Jē′ṣus, but he wanted to watch him, and, if possible, to find some fault in him. He did not show Jē′ṣus the respect due to a guest, did not welcome him, nor did he bring water to wash Jē′ṣus' feet, as was done to people when they came in from walking. For in that land they wore no shoes or stockings, but only sandals, covering the soles of their feet; and they often washed their feet when they came into the house.

At meals they did not sit up around the table, but leaned on couches, with their heads toward the table and their feet away from it. While Jē′ṣus was leaning in this manner upon his couch at the table, a woman came into the dining-room, bringing a flask of ointment, such as was used to anoint people of high rank. She knelt down at the feet of Jē′ṣus, weeping, and began to wet his feet with her tears, and then to wipe them with her long hair. She anointed his feet with the ointment, and kissed them over and over again.

This woman had not been a good woman. She had led a wicked life; but by her act she showed that in her heart she was truly sorry for her sins. When Sī′mon, the Phăr′ĭ-see, saw her at the Saviour's feet he thought within himself, though he did not say it, "If this man were really a prophet coming from God, he would have known how wicked this woman is, and he would not have allowed her to touch him."

Jē′ṣus knew this man's thought, and he said, "Sī′mon, I have something to say to you."

And Sī′mon said, "Master, say on."

Then Jē′ṣus said, "There was a certain lender of money to whom two men were owing. One man owed him five hundred shillings, and the other owed him fifty. When he found that they could not pay their debts, he freely forgave them, and let them both go free. Which of these two will love that man most?"

"Why," said Sī′mon, "I suppose that the one to whom he forgave the most will love him the most."

"You are right," said Jē′ṣus. Then he turned toward the woman, and added, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wetted my feet with her tears, and has wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss of welcome, but she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head even with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. You have acted as though you owed me little, and you have loved me little; but she feels that she owes me much, and she loves me greatly. I say to you, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.'"

Then he spoke to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven."

Those who were around the table whispered to each other, "Who is this man that dares to act as God, and even to forgive sins?"

But Jē′ṣus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace!"

And Jē′ṣus went through all that part of Găl′ĭ-lee, preaching and teaching in all the villages, telling the people everywhere the good news of the kingdom of God.

Story Fifteen

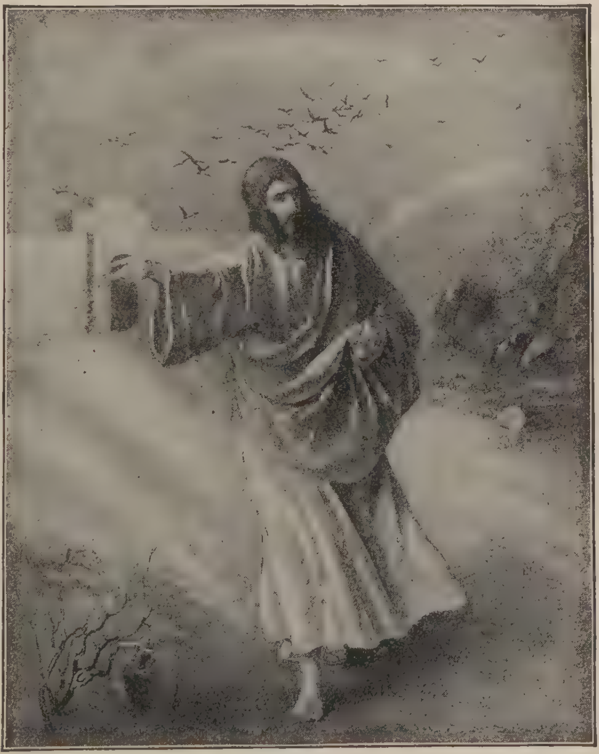
SOME STORIES THAT JESUS TOLD BY THE SEA

Matthew xiii : 1 to 53; Mark iv : 1 to 34; Luke viii : 4 to 18.

AFTER Jē′ṣus had journeyed through the southern parts of Găl′ĭ-lee, teaching and healing the sick, he came again to Cȧ-pĕr′na-ŭm; and one day went out of the city to a place where the beach rose up gently from the water. There he sat in Sī′mon Pē′tĕr's boat, as he had sat before, and spoke to a great crowd of people who stood on the beach.

At this time Jē′ṣus began teaching the people by parables; that is, by stories which showed the truths of the gospel. Everybody liked to hear a story; and the story would often lead people to think, and to find out the truth for themselves. The first of these parables or stories that Jē′ṣus gave was called "The Parable of the Sower."

"Listen to me," said Jē′ṣus. "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seeds fell by the roadside, where the ground was hard, where some of the seed was trodden down, and other seeds were picked up by the birds. Some of the seed fell where the soil was thin, because rocks were under it. These seeds grew up quickly, but when the sun became hot, they were scorched and dried up, because they did not have enough soil and moisture for their roots. Other seeds fell among briars and thorns, and the thorns kept them from growing. And some seeds fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, thirty times as many as were sown, sixty times, and even a hundred times. Whoever has ears to hear this, let him hear!" When Jē′şus was alone with his disciples, they said to him, "Why do you speak to the people in parables? What does this parable about the man sowing his seeds mean?"



THE SOWER.

And Jē′şus said to them, "To you it is given to know the deep things of the kingdom of God, because you seek to find them out. But to many these things are spoken in parables, for they hear the story, but do not try to find out what it means. They have eyes, but they do not see; and they have ears, but they do not hear. For they do not wish to understand with the heart, and turn to the Lord and have their sins forgiven them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Listen now to the meaning of the parable of the sower.

"The sower is the one who speaks the word of God; and the seed is the word which he speaks. The seed by the roadside are those who hear; but the evil one comes, and snatches away the truth, so that they forget it. The seed on the rock are those who hear the word with joy, but have no root in themselves, and their goodness lasts only for a little time. That which is sown among the thorns are they who hear, but the cares of the world, and seeking after riches and the enjoyments of this life, crowd out the gospel from their lives, so that it does them but little good. But that which is sown on the good ground are they who take the word into an honest and good heart, and keep it, and bring forth fruit in their lives."

Another parable or story given by Jē′şus to the people was "The Parable of the Tares":

"The kingdom of God is as a man sowing good seed in his field; but while people were asleep, his enemy came and sowed tares, or weeds, among the wheat, and then went away. When the shoots of grain began to have heads of wheat then the tares were seen among them. The servants of the farmer came to him, and said, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How did the tares come into it?'

"He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'

"'Shall we go and pick out the tares from among the wheat?' asked the servants.

"'No,' answered the farmer, 'for while you are pulling up the tares, you will root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, "Take out the tares first, and bind them in bundles, to be burned; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

Another parable was that of "The Mustard Seed." He said:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. This is the smallest of all seeds; but it grows up to be a large bush, almost a tree, so that the birds of the air light upon its branches and rest under its shadow."

Another parable was "The Leaven, or Yeast":

"The kingdom of heaven is like a little leaven, or yeast, that a woman mixed with dough when she was making bread. It worked through all the dough and changed it into good, light bread."

These parables Jē′ṣus told to the people as he sat in the boat and the people stood on the shore. But he did not tell them what the parables meant, for he wished them to think out the meaning for themselves. After giving the parables he sent the people away, and came back to the house in the city. There his disciples said to him, "Tell us the meaning of the parable of the tares growing in the field."

Jē′ṣus said to them, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are those who belong to the kingdom of God; but the tares, the weeds, are the children of the evil one; the enemy that sowed them is Sā′tan, the devil; and the reapers are the angels. Just as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send out his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all that do evil and cause harm, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. But the people of God in that day shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

And in the house Jē′ṣus gave to his disciples some more parables for them to think upon. He said:

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure which a man found hidden in a field. He was glad when he saw it, but hid it again; and then went home and sold all that he had and bought that field with the treasure in it.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who was seeking precious pearls. This man found one pearl of great price. He went and sold all that he had, and bought the pearl.

"Once more: the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea, and took in fish of all kinds. When it was full, they drew the net to the shore. Then they sat down and picked out the good fish from among the bad. The good fish they put away for safe keeping, but the bad fish they threw away. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall come, and shall place the wicked apart from the good, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Story Sixteen

“PEACE, BE STILL”

Matthew viii : 18 to 34; Mark iv : 35, to v : 21; Luke viii : 22 to 40.

WHEN the evening came, after teaching all day by the sea and in the house, Jē′şus saw that the crowds of people were still pressing around him, and there was no time for him to rest. Jē′şus said, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.”

So they took Jē′şus into the boat, and began to row across the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee. Other little boats were with them, for many wished to go with Jē′şus. While they were rowing, Jē′şus fell asleep, resting on a cushion of the boat. Suddenly a storm arose, and drove great waves of water into the boat, so that it was in danger of sinking, but Jē′şus slept on. The disciples awoke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are lost! Help us, or we shall perish!”

Jē′şus awaked, and rose up, and looked out upon the sea. He said to the waves, “Peace, be still!”

And at once the wind ceased, the waves were quiet, and there was a great calm. Jē′şus said to his disciples, “Why are you afraid? How is it that you have so little faith in me?”

They all wondered at Jē′şus’ power, and said to each other, “Who is this man whom even the winds and the sea obey?”

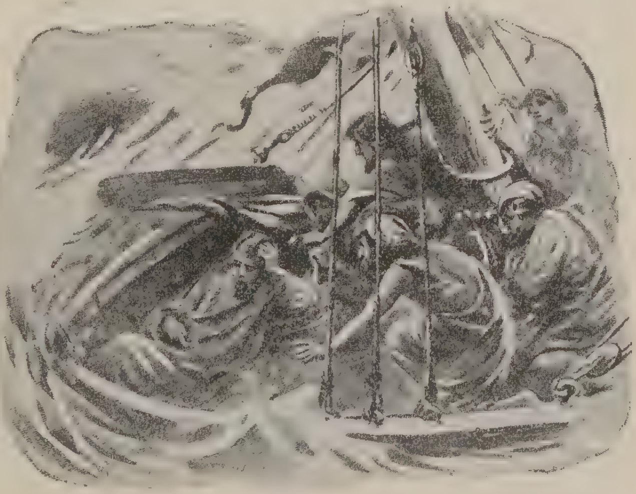
They came to the land on the eastern side of the lake, which was sometimes called “the country of the Găd′a-rēneş,” from the people who lived in the large city of Gard′a-ra, which was not far away, and sometimes “Dė-căp′o-lĭs.” As they were landing a man came running down to meet them. He was one of those poor men in whose body evil spirits were living. He would not stay in any house, but slept in the graveyard among the dead. Nor did he wear any clothes. They had often chained him, but he had broken loose from his chains, and no one was able to bind him.

When this man saw Jē′şus afar off he ran towards him, and fell down on his face before him. Jē'ṣus saw what was the trouble with this man, and he spoke to the evil spirit in him, "Come out of this man, vile spirit of evil!"

The spirit within the man cried with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jē'ṣus, thou Son of the Most High God? I call upon thee in the name of the Lord, do not make me to suffer!"

Jē'ṣus saw that this man was troubled more even than most men who had evil spirits in them. He said to the evil one, "What is your name?"

And the spirit said, "My name is Legion, because there are many of us." "A legion" was a name given to an army; and in this man was a whole army of evil spirits. There was on the mountain side a great drove of hogs feeding. The Jewṣ were not allowed to keep hogs, nor to eat their flesh; and the evil spirits said to Jē'ṣus, "If we must leave this man, will you let us go into the drove of hogs?"



JĒ'ṢUS ASLEEP IN THE BOAT.

Jē'ṣus gave them leave; and the evil spirits went out of the man, and went into the hogs. The whole drove, two thousand in number, became at once wild. They rushed down a steep place on the mountain, and into the sea, and were all drowned.

The men who kept the hogs ran into the city near by, and told all the people how the man had been made well, and what had come to the drove of hogs, how they had been drowned. The people came out to meet Jē'ṣus, and they were full of fear. They saw the man who had been filled with evil spirits, now sitting at the feet of

Jē′ṣus, no longer naked, but clothed, and in his right mind. But they did not think of what Jē′ṣus had done to this man; they thought only of the hogs that they had lost; and they begged Jē′ṣus to go away from their land.

Jē′ṣus turned away from these people, and went again to the boat on the shore; and then the man who had been set free from the evil spirits pleaded with Jē′ṣus that he might go with him. But Jē′ṣus would not take him into the boat. He said:

"Go home to your friends, and tell them how the Lord has had mercy on you, and has done great things for you."

The man went home and told all the people in the land of Dė-căp′o-lĭs the great things that Jē′ṣus had done for him.

And Jē′ṣus went on board the boat, and crossed over the lake, and came again to his own city of Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm.

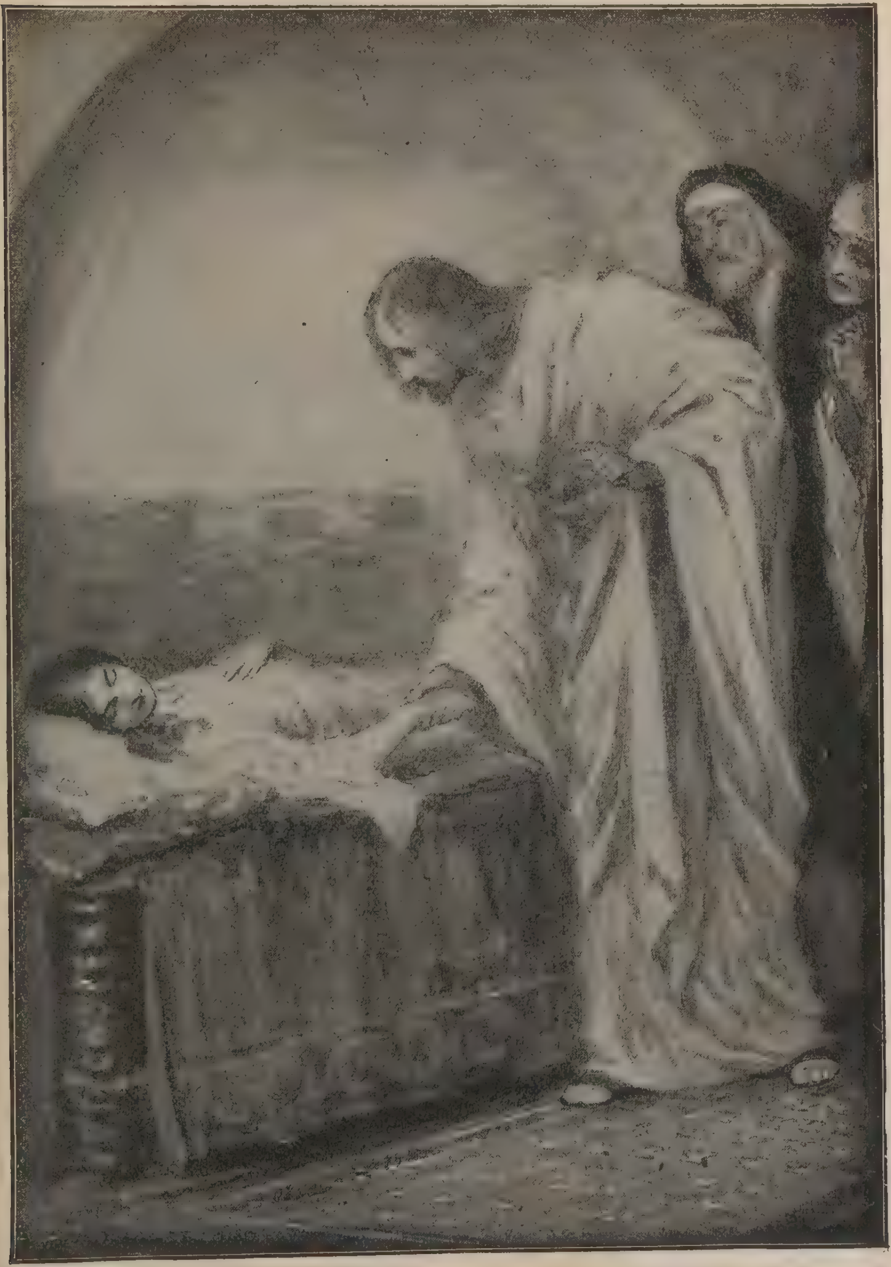
Story Seventeen

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS RAISED TO LIFE

Matthew ix : 18 to 38; x : 1 to 42; Mark v : 22 to 43; Luke viii : 41 to 56; ix : 1 to 5.

WHEN Jē′ṣus and his disciples landed at Cȧ′pẽr′na-ŭm, after their sail across the lake, they found a crowd of people on the shore waiting for them. And a man came forward from the throng and fell down at the feet of Jē′ṣus. He was one of the chief men in the synagogue, and his name was Jȧ-ī′rus. He said:

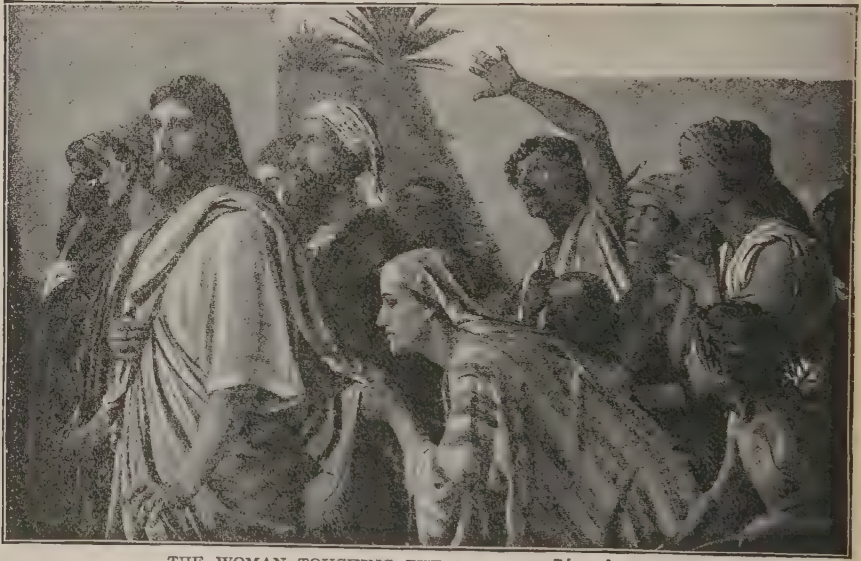
"O Master, come to my house at once! My little daughter is dying; but if you will come and lay your hands upon her, she will live."



JÉ'ṢUS RAISING TO LIFE THE DAUGHTER OF JÂ-Ī'RUS.

And Jē′şus went with Jȧ-ī′rus, and his disciples followed him, and also many people, who thronged around Jē′şus. In the crowd was a poor woman who had been ill for very many years from a sore out of which her blood ran, so that she was very weak. Many doctors had tried to help her but they could not; and she had spent all her money, so that she was now very poor.

This woman had heard of Jē′şus; and she tried to come to him, but she could not reach him in the throng of people. She said to herself, "If I can touch only his garment, I know that the touch will make me well." And as Jē′şus passed by, she reached out her hand and touched the hem of his robe. At that instant she felt in her body that she was cured. Jē′şus himself felt her touch, and turning around, said, "Who touched me?"



THE WOMAN TOUCHING THE HEM OF JĒ′ŞUS′ ROBE.

Pē′tẽr said to him, "Master, the crowd throngs around you and presses upon you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But Jē′şus said, "Some one has touched me; for I feel that power has gone out from me."

And he looked around to see who it was. Then the woman came forward, fearing and trembling over what she had done. She fell down before Jē′şus, and told how she had touched him and had been made well. But Jē′şus said to her, "Daughter, be of good comfort; your faith has made you well; rise up and go in peace."

And from that hour the woman was free from her disease. All this time, while Jē′şus was waiting, Jȧ-ī′rus, the father of the dying child, stood beside Jē′şus in great trouble, for he feared that his child would die before Jē′şus could come to his house. And at that moment some one came to him and said, "It is too late; your daughter is dead; you need not trouble the Master any more."

But Jē′şus said to him, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will yet be saved to you."

Soon they came to the house where Jȧ-ī′rus lived; and they could hear the people weeping and crying aloud. Jē′şus said to them, "Why do you make such a noise? The little girl is not dead, but only asleep."

Jē′şus meant by this that we need not be filled with sorrow when our friends die, for death is only a sleep for a time until God shall awake them. But they did not understand this; and they would not be comforted, for they knew that the child was dead.

Jē′şus would not allow any of the crowd of people to go into the room where the dead child was. He took with him three of his disciples, Pē′tẽr, Jāmeş, and Jŏhn, and the father and mother of the child, and shut out all the rest of the people. On a couch was lying the dead body of a girl, twelve years old. Taking the hand of the child into his own, he said to her, "Little girl, rise up!"

And the life of the little girl came again. She opened her eyes, and sat up. Jē′şus told them to give her something to eat; and he said to them, "Do not tell any one how the little girl was brought to life."

Already the crowds following him were so great that he could not teach the people in the city; and if it became known that he could raise the dead to life, the throng and the press of the multitudes would be greater. His great work was to teach and to bring life to the souls of men, rather than to heal, or to raise the dead.

And he went out once more among the villages of Găl′ĭ-lee, teaching in the synagogues, and healing the sick people who were brought to him. He pitied the people, because there was no one to give them the gospel; and they were like sheep wandering and lost without a shepherd. He said to his disciples:

"The harvest truly is great, but the workers to gather the harvest are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest, that he may send out reapers into these harvest-fields."

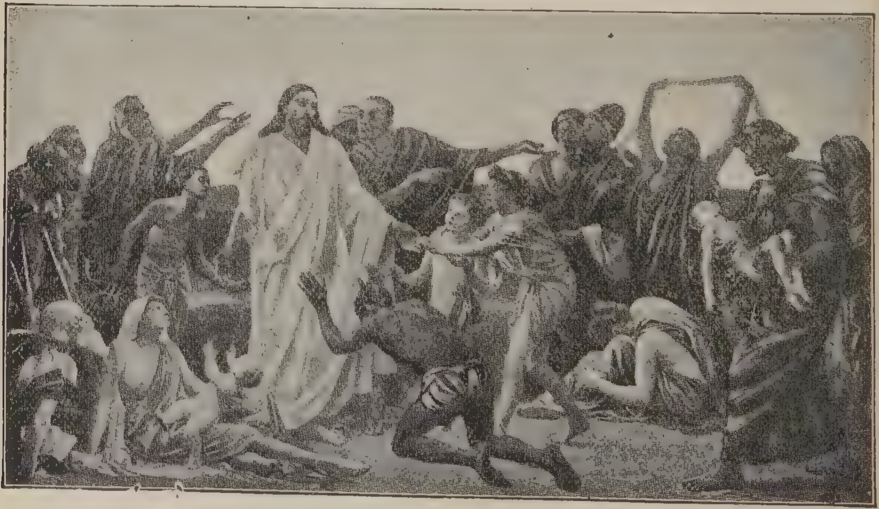
And after this Jē′şus sent out his twelve disciples to different places to preach in his name to the people. He sent them forth in pairs, two of them together, so that they could help each other. And he gave them power to heal the sick, and to cast out evil spirits from men. He said to them:

"Go to the lost sheep of the house of Ĭş′ra-el; and as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out the evil spirits; freely you have received, freely give. Do not take any money with you; but at every place ask for some good man, and stay at his house.

"And if any people will not listen to your words, when you go out of that house or out of that city, shake off the dust from your sandals, as a sign; and God will judge that house or that city.

"He that hears you, hears me; and he that hears me, hears him who sent me. And if any one will give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall not lose his reward."

The twelve disciples went out in pairs, as Jē′şus had commanded them, and preached in all the cities of Găl′ĭ-lee, that men should cease from their sins and turn to God.



JĒ′ŞUS HEALING THE SICK.

Story Eighteen

A DANCING GIRL, AND WHAT WAS GIVEN HER

Matthew xi : 2 to 19; xiv : 1 to 12; Mark vi : 14 to 29; Luke vii : 18 to 35.

YOU remember that just before Jē′şus went from Jė-rṳ′-sȧ-lĕm to Găl′ĭ-lee, Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was put in prison by the king, Hĕr′od Ăn′tĭ-păs. Jē′şus stayed in Găl′ĭ-lee for a year, and nearly all the time Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst was alone in his prison near the Dead Sea. His followers, who were now very few, came to see him, and told him of the works that Jē′şus was doing. These were wonderful, but they were not what Jŏhn had expected Jē′şus to do; and in his prison, with no one to explain what Jē′şus was saying and doing, Jŏhn began to doubt a little whether Jē′şus were the Saviour who had been promised so long. Then, too, Jŏhn's followers were inclined to feel jealous, because their master was now left alone, and all the people were seeking Jē′şus. Jŏhn sent two of his followers to Jē′şus, to ask him this question, "Are you really the Saviour who is to come, or are we to look for some other as the promised Chrīst?"

When these men came with this message from Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst they found Jē′şus in the midst of a great company of suffering people. They saw him making the sick well by his touch, giving sight to the blind, and casting out the evil spirits; and they listened to the words of Jē′şus as he taught the people.

When his work for the time was done, Jē′şus turned to the men who had come from Jŏhn, and said to them, "Go and tell Jŏhn what you have seen and heard, how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is that man who believes in me without doubting."

After these men had gone to bear the words of Jē′şus to Jŏhn, Jē′şus spoke to the people about Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst. He said:

"What was it that you went out into the wilderness to see? Was it a reed shaken by the wind? Was it a man dressed in rich robes? Those who are clad in splendid garments, and sit at feasts, are in the houses of kings. Who was the man whom you went out to see? Was he a prophet of God? I tell you that he was a prophet, and more than a prophet; for he was the one who came to make men ready for the coming of the king. And I say to you, that among those who are born on the earth, there has never arisen a greater man than Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst. Yet he who is the least in the kingdom of God is greater than Jŏhn; for he can see with his own eyes, what Jŏhn can only hear of from others, the works of the gospel."

All the common people who heard this were glad, for they believed that Jŏhn was a prophet, and they had been baptized by him. But the Phăr′ĭ-seeş and the rulers were not pleased, because they had refused to listen to Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst or to be baptized by him.

Not long after this the end came to the noble life of Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst. A great feast was held on King Hĕr′od's birthday, and all the princes and nobles of his kingdom were in the palace, eating and drinking together. While they were making merry, the young daughter of the woman Hė-rō′dĭ-as, who lived with Hĕr′od as his wife, came into the supper-room and danced before the guests. Hĕr′od was so greatly pleased with her dancing that he said to her, "Ask whatever you please, and I will give it to you."

He swore a solemn oath that he would give her whatever she might ask, even to the half of his kingdom. The girl went to her mother, and said to her, "Tell me, what shall I ask?"

Her mother told her what to ask, and she came back with haste to the king, and said, "I will ask that you give me here upon a plate the head of Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst!"

The king was very sorry that he had made the promise, but he was ashamed to break his word in the presence of his princes. He sent a man to the prison, with orders that the head of Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst should be cut off and brought. It was done; and the young girl took it upon a plate, and gave it to her mother Hė-rō′dĭ-as.

So, as Hĕr′od's father, thirty years before, had caused all the little children of Běth'lĕ-hĕm to be killed, this King Hĕr'od, the son, caused Jŏhn the Băp'tĭst, one of the best of men and a great prophet, to be put to death.

The followers of Jŏhn the Băp'tĭst went to the prison, and took away his body and buried it; and then they went and told Jē'şus of all that had been done. After this they were among the followers of Jē'şus.

Hĕr'od the king heard of what Jē'şus was doing, the sick healed, the blind made to see, and the dead raised to life. Everybody by this time was talking of Jē'şus and wondering who he was. Some said, "This is the prophet Ē-lī'jah come again to earth."

Others said, "If he is not Ē-lī'jah, he is surely one of the prophets of the old time who has come to life."

But Hĕr'od said, "I know who this is. It is Jŏhn the Băp'tĭst, whom I killed! He has come back to life, and by him all these great works are wrought!"

And Hĕr'od was in great alarm, for he was afraid of the man whom he had slain.

TĪ'-BĒ'RĬ-AS, ON THE SEA OF GĂL'Ĭ-LEE, WHERE HĔR'OD LIVED.

Story Nineteen

THE FEAST BESIDE THE SEA, AND WHAT FOLLOWED IT

Matthew xiv : 13 to 36; Mark vi : 30 to 56; Luke ix : 10 to 17; John vi : 1 to 71.

WHEN the twelve disciples came back to Jē′ṣus, after preaching in his name among the villages of Găl′ĭ-lee, they told him of all that they had done, and of what they had said to the people. The multitudes seeking after Jē′ṣus were now greater than ever before, for it was again near the time of the Passover, and very many on their way to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm turned aside to see and to hear the great Teacher. So many people were coming and going that they could scarcely find time even to eat. Jē′ṣus said to the twelve:

"Come with me apart into a quiet place, away from the crowds, and let us rest for a time."

They went into the boat and rowed across the lake to an open place, where no one lived, not far from the city of Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ. But they could not be alone, for the people saw them going, and watched them from the shore, and went on foot around the northern end of the lake, and found them. When Jē′ṣus saw how eager the crowds were to hear him, he took pity on them and taught them, and healed such among them as were sick.

As it began to grow toward evening, the disciples said to Jē′ṣus, "This is a lonely place, and there is nothing here for such a crowd of people to eat. Send them away before it is too late, and tell them to go to the towns and get food."

But Jē′ṣus said to them, "They need not go away. You can give them food to eat."

They said to him, "Shall we go into the town and buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread, so that each one of them may have a little?"

Jē′şus turned to Phĭl′ĭp, one of his disciples, and said to him, "Phĭl′ĭp, where shall we find bread, that all these may eat?"

Jē′şus said this to try Phĭl′ĭp's faith, for he himself knew what he would do. Phĭl′ĭp looked at the great crowd, full five thousand men, besides women and children, and he said, "Two hundred shillings' worth of bread would not be enough to give to every one even a little piece."

Just then another of the disciples, Ăn′drew, the brother of Pē′tẽr, said to Jē′şus, "There is a boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two little fishes; but what use would they be among so many people?"

Jē′şus said to the disciples, "Go out among the people, and divide them into companies of fifty and a hundred, and tell them to sit down in order."

So the people all sat down; and upon the green grass, arranged in rows and squares in their garments of different colors, they looked like beds of flowers.

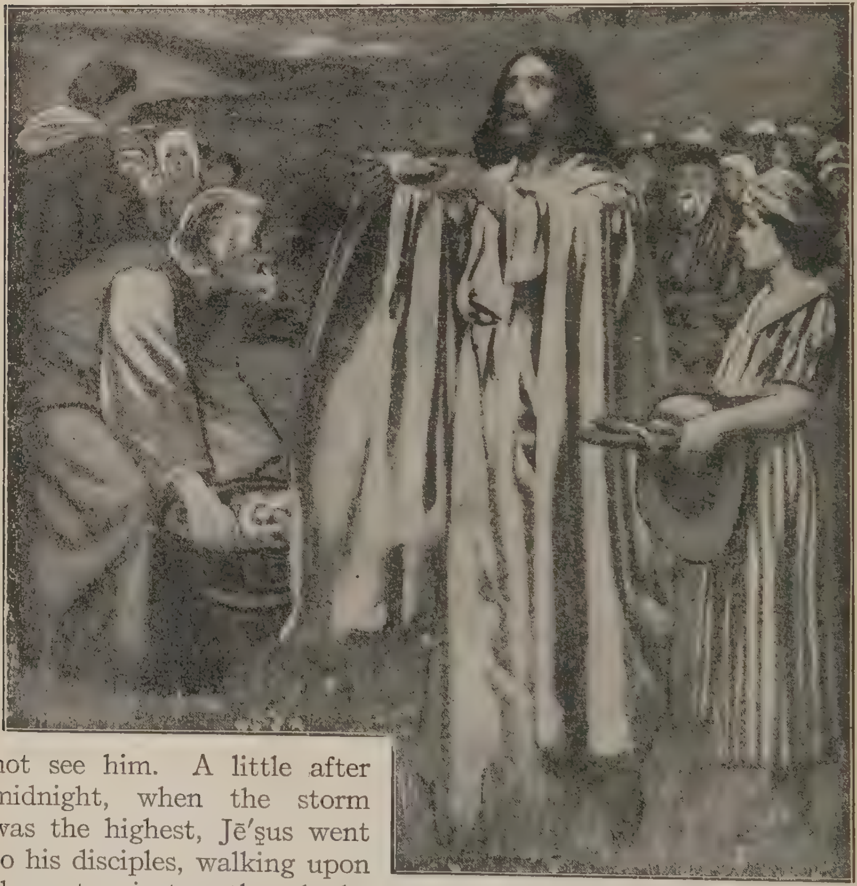
Then Jē′şus took into his hands the five loaves and the two fishes which the boy had brought. He looked up to heaven, and blessed the food; and broke the loaves and the dried fishes, and gave the pieces to the disciples. They went among the companies of people, and gave to every one bread and fish, as much as each needed. So they all ate, and had enough.

Then Jē′şus said, "Gather up the pieces of food that are left, so that nothing may be lost."

Each of the disciples carried a basket among the people, and when they came to Jē′şus all the twelve baskets were filled with the pieces that were left over of the five loaves and the two fishes.

When the people saw that here was one who could give them food, they were ready at once to make Jē′şus their king, and to break away from the rule of the Rō′manş. Jē′şus was a King, but he would not be such a king as they wished. His kingdom was to be in the hearts of men who loved him, not a kingdom set up by the swords of soldiers. He found that his disciples were ready to help the people to make him a king, even against his own will.

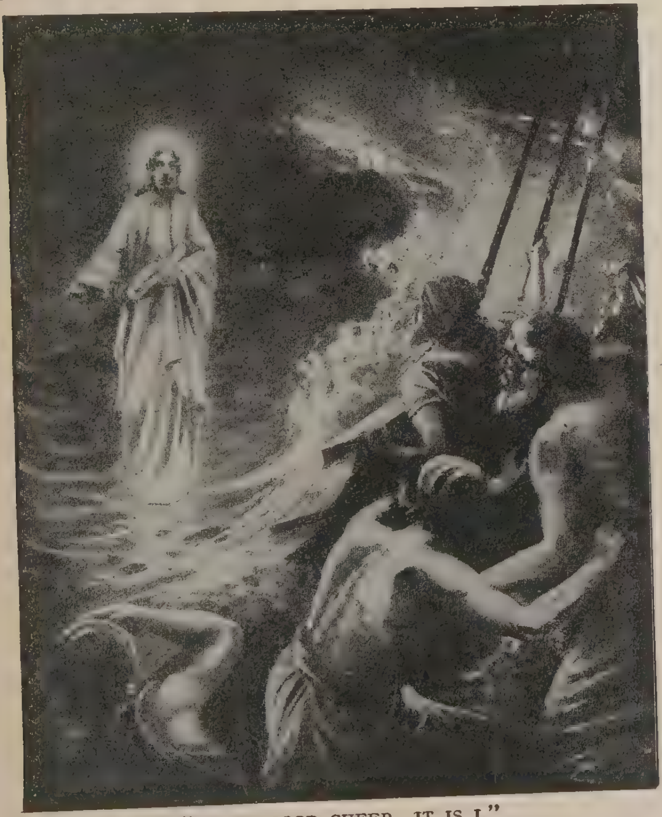
So Jē′şus first compelled his disciples to go on board the boat, though they were not willing to do so, and to row across the lake to Că′pẽr′na-ŭm. Then he sent away the great crowd of people who were still eager that he should be their king. And when all had gone away, and he was left alone, he went up into the mountain to pray. While he was praying in the night a great storm arose upon the lake, and from the mountain Jē′şus could see his disciples working hard with their oars against the waves, although they could not see him. A little after midnight, when the storm was the highest, Jē′şus went to his disciples, walking upon the water, just as though the sea was dry land. The men in the boat saw a strange figure coming near them upon the sea, and cried out with fear, for they thought that it must be a spirit. But Jē′şus called out to them, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid!" And then they knew that it was their Lord.



JĒ′ŞUS BLESSES THE FOOD.

Pē′tẽr spoke to Jē′şus, and said, "Lord, if it be thou, let me come to thee, walking upon the water." And Jē'ṣus said to Pē'tẽr, "Come."

Then Sī'mon Pē'tẽr leaped overboard from the ship, and he, too, walked on the water to go to Jē'ṣus. But when he saw how great was the storm on the sea, he began to be afraid, and forgetting to trust in the word of Jē'ṣus, he began to sink. He cried out, "Lord, save me!"


"BE OF GOOD CHEER, IT IS I."

And Jē'ṣus reached out his hand, and caught hold of him, and lifted him up, saying, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt my word?"

When Jē'ṣus came on board the boat with Pē'tẽr, at once the wind ceased and the sea was calm. The disciples wondered greatly as they saw the power of Jē'ṣus. They fell down before him, and said, "In truth thou art the Son of God!" When they came to the shore, and the daylight arose, they saw that they were at the land of Ḡen-nĕs'a-rĕt, a plain a little to the south of Cȧ'pẽr'na-ŭm. They went ashore; and as soon as the people saw Jē'ṣus, and knew who he was, they brought their sick to him, and begged that they might only touch the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made well.

Soon after this Jē′ṣus came again to Că-pẽr′na-ŭm, and went into the synagogue, which was full of people, some of whom had eaten of the five loaves a few days before. These people wished Jē′ṣus to feed them in the same way again, but Jē′ṣus said to them, "Seek not for food that passes away, but for the food that gives everlasting life, such as the Son of man can give you."

They said to him, "What sign can you show that God has sent you? Mō′ṣeṣ gave our fathers bread from heaven, the manna in the desert. What can you do?"

You have read of the manna which fed the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes in the wilderness. Then Jē′ṣus said to them, "It was not Mō′ṣeṣ, but God, who gave your fathers bread; and God gives you now the true bread from heaven, in his Son who came down from heaven, to give life to the world."

As soon as the people found that Jē′ṣus would not work wonders to please them, they turned away from him and left him, although only a few days before they would have made him a king. When Jē′ṣus saw that the great crowds of people were with him no longer, Jē′ṣus said to his twelve disciples, "Will you also go away and leave me?"

Then Sī′mon Pē′tẽr answered him, "Lord, to whom else can we go? for thou only hast the words that will give us everlasting life."

Story Twenty

THE ANSWER TO A MOTHER'S PRAYER

Matthew xv : 21 to 39; Mark vii : 24, to viii : 26.

AFTER the feeding of the five thousand, and the talk which followed it in the synagogue of Cȧ-pēr′na-ŭm, Jē′şus no longer sought to preach to the people in crowds, as he had preached before. He had spoken his last words to the people of Găl′ĭ-lee, and now he sought to be alone with his disciples, that he might teach them many things which they needed. Jē′şus knew that in a few months, less than a year, he would leave his disciples to carry on the work of preaching his gospel to the world. Before that time should come Jē′şus wished to teach and train his disciples; so he tried to be apart from the people and alone with these twelve men.

With this purpose in his mind, Jē′şus led his disciples away from Cȧ-pēr′na-ŭm, across Găl′ĭ-lee westward, to the land of Tȳre and Sī′dŏn, near the Great Sea. On the border of this land he came to a village, and in it went with his disciples into a house. Jē′şus did not wish the people of the place to know that he was there; but he could not be hid.

A woman of that place, who was not of the Jew′ĭsh race, but belonged to the old Cā′năan-īte people, heard of Jē′şus' coming. She sought out Jē′şus, and fell down before him, and begged him to come to her house and cure her daughter, in whom was an evil spirit. At first Jē′şus would not answer her, for he had not come to that place to do works of healing. But she kept on crying and calling upon Jē′şus to help her daughter, until the disciples said, "Master, send this woman away, for she is a trouble to us, crying out after us!"

They thought that a Gĕn′tīle woman, one who did not belong to the race of Ĭş′ra-el, was not worthy of the Lord's care. But Jē′şus wished to teach his disciples that he did care for this woman, though she was a Gĕn′tīle and a stranger. To show them how strong was her faith, he said to her, "I am not sent to the Gĕn′tīleş, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Ĭş′ra-el."

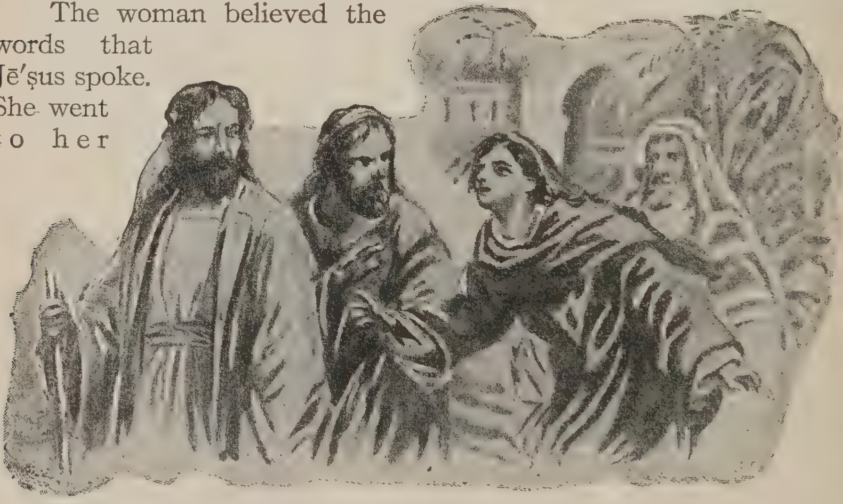
But the woman would not be discouraged; she kept on saying, "Lord, help me!"

Jē′şus said to her again, "It is not fitting to take the children's bread, and throw it to the dogs!"

Then the woman said, "It is true, Lord; yet the little dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs!"

And Jē′şus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great! It shall be done even as you ask. Go your way; the evil spirit is sent out of your daughter."

The woman believed the words that Jē′şus spoke. She went to her home and there found her daughter resting upon the bed, freed from the evil spirit.



THE GĔN′TĪLE WOMAN SEEKS JĒ′ŞUS FOR HELP.

So many people sought to see Jē′şus in that place, that he left that land with his disciples, and went around Găl′ĭ-lee, and came again to the country called Dē-căp′o-lĭs, on the east of the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee. You remember that Jē′şus had visited this country before, when he cast the army of evil spirits out of a man into the hogs. At that time the people almost drove Jē′şus away from their land; but now they were glad to see him, and brought their sick to him to be healed. Perhaps they had heard from the man out of whom the evil spirits had gone how kind and good and helpful Jē′ṣus was.

They led to Jē′ṣus a man who was deaf, and could not speak plainly. He was what we would call "tongue-tied." They asked Jē′ṣus to cure him; but Jē′ṣus would not do his work as a sight for men to look upon. He took the man away from the crowd, and when he was alone with him he put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue. Then he looked up to heaven, and gave a sigh, and said to the man, "Be opened!"

Then the man's ears were opened, and his tongue was set free, so that he heard and spoke plainly. Jē′ṣus told the man, and those with him, not to let others know what he had done; but they could not keep from telling the good news to everybody. They were full of wonder, for they had not before seen the works of Jē′ṣus; and they said, "He has done all things well; he makes even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak!"

And in the land of Dė-căp′o-lĭs, as before in Găl′ĭ-lee, great crowds of people came to see and hear Jē′ṣus. They followed him, without thinking that they would need any food to eat; and Jē′ṣus said to his disciples, "I feel a pity for this people, for they have now been with me three days, and they have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will faint by the way, for many of them came from far."

The disciples answered him, "How can we find bread for such a great crowd of people, here in a desert place, so far from the villages?"

"How many loaves of bread have you?" asked Jē′ṣus. They said, "We have seven loaves and a few small fishes."

Then he told all the people to sit down on the ground. When they were seated, Jē′ṣus took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks to God, and broke them, and gave them to his disciples, and they gave them to the people. Then, as before, he caused them to gather up the food that was left, and they filled seven large baskets with the pieces. At this time four thousand men were fed, besides women and children. And at once after the meal, he sent the people to their homes, and with his disciples went on board a boat, and sailed across the lake to a place on the western shore. There he stayed only a short time, and then sailed northward to Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ, at the head of the lake.

At Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ they brought to him a blind man, and asked him to touch his eyes. But Jē′şus would not heal the man while a crowd was looking on. He led the man by his hand out of the village alone. Then he spat on the man's eyes, and touched them with his hands, and said to him, "Can you see anything?"

The man looked up, and said, "I see men; but they look like trees walking."

Then again Jē′şus laid his hands upon the man's eyes. He looked once more, and now could see all things clearly. Jē′şus sent him to his home, and said to him, "Do not even go into the village, nor tell it to any one in the village."

For Jē′şus wished not to have crowds of people coming to him, but to be alone with his disciples, for he had many things to teach them.

Story Twenty-one

THE GLORY OF JESUS ON THE MOUNTAIN

Matthew xvi : 13, to xvii : 23; Mark viii : 27, to ix : 32; Luke ix : 18 to 45.

FROM Bĕth-sā′ĭ-dȧ on the Sea of Găl′ĭ-lee, Jē′şus led his disciples still further north to Çæs-a-rē′a Phĭ-lĭp′pī, at the foot of the great Mount Hẽr′mon. The name of this place means "Phĭl′ĭp's Çæs-a-rē′a;" and it was so called because it was under the rule of King Hĕr′od Phĭl′ĭp, a brother of King Hĕr′od Ăn′tĭ-păs, who ruled in Găl′ĭ-lee; and there was another Çæs-a-rē′a on the shore of the Great Sea, south of Mount Cär′mel. At Çæs-a-rē′a Phĭ-lĭp′pī, Jē′şus asked his disciples this question, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" "The Son of man" was the name by which Jē′şus often spoke of himself.

They answered him:

"Some men say that you are Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst risen from the dead; some say that you are the prophet Ė-lī′jah, or the prophet Jĕr-e-mī′ah, come again to earth."

Then said Jē′ṣus, "But who do you say that I am?"

Sī′mon Pē′tẽr answered for them all, saying:

"Thou art the Anointed One, the Chrīst, the Son of the living God!"

Jē′ṣus said to Pē′tẽr:

"Sī′mon, this has come to you not from men, but from my Father who is in heaven. You are Pē′tẽr, the Rock; and on this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of earth shall not overcome it."

For the church of Chrīst is made of those who believe what Pē′tẽr said, that Jē′ṣus is the Chrīst, the Saviour of the world; and who obey Jē′ṣus as their Lord and King.

After this Jē′ṣus began to tell his disciples what things were to come upon him before many months. He said:

"We are going up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm; and there the people will refuse to own the Son of man; and he shall suffer many wrongs from the rulers, and chief priests; and shall be killed; and on the third day he shall be raised to life."

But the disciples could not believe that such sad things would come to pass with Jē′ṣus. They thought that he would reign as a king, and that high places in his kingdom would be given to themselves. Pē′tẽr took Jē′ṣus apart from the rest, and said to him:

"Master, do not speak of such things. You will not suffer and die. You shall be a king!"

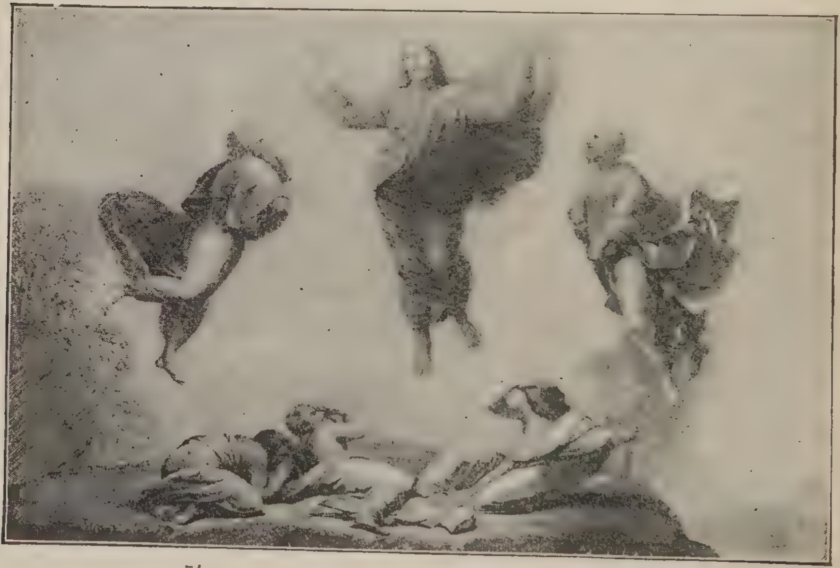
But Jē′ṣus saw that under Pē′tẽr's words was the evil one, tempting him, and he said to Pē′tẽr:

"Go from me, Sā′tan, evil one! You would be a stumbling-block to me, to make me fall! You are seeking not that which is of God, but that which is of men!"

For Jē′ṣus knew that while all men wished him to be a king, ruling over a kingdom on the earth, it was God's will for him to die upon the cross to save the world from sin. Then Jē′ṣus called the people to come near with his disciples, and he said to them all:

"If any man will come after me, let him give up his own will, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever has a will to save his life here, shall lose it hereafter. And whoever is willing to give up his life for my sake, shall find it again in the life everlasting. What gain will it be to a man to have the whole world, and to lose his own soul? For the Son of man will come in his glory, with all the holy angels, and then he will give to every man according to his acts. And if any man is ashamed to own the Lord now, the Lord will not own him in that day!"

One night, about a week after saying those words, Jē′ş us called three of his disciples, Pē′tẽr, Jāmeş, and Jŏhn, and with them climbed up the side of Mount Hẽr′mon. At a high place on the mountain, the three disciples lay down to sleep, but Jē′şus sought his Father in prayer. While Jē′şus was praying, a great change came over him. His face began to shine as bright as the sun, and his garments became whiter than snow. The three disciples awoke, and saw their Lord with all this glory beaming from him.



JĒ′ŞUS AND HIS DISCIPLES ON MOUNT HẼR′MON.

And they saw two men talking with Jē′şus. These were Mō′şeş and Ê-lī′jah, who had come down from heaven to meet Jē′şus; and they spoke with him of the death that he was to die in Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm. As these men were passing from the sight of the disciples, Pē′tẽr spoke, scarcely knowing what he was saying, "Master, it is good for us to be here! Let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Mō′ṣeṣ, and one for Ē-lī′jah!"

While Pē′tẽr was speaking a bright and glorious cloud came over them all; and the three disciples felt a great fear as they found themselves in the cloud, and no longer able to see their Master. Out of the cloud came the voice of God, saying these words:

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him!"

As the disciples heard this voice they fell upon their faces on the ground in great fear. And Jē′ṣus came and touched them saying, "Rise up, and do not be afraid."

Then they looked up, and lo, the bright cloud had passed away, the two men were no more in sight, and Jē′ṣus was standing alone. They walked together down the mountain; and Jē′ṣus said to them very earnestly:

'Do not tell to any man what you have seen, until the Son of man is risen from the dead."

They wondered what this "rising from the dead" could mean; for even yet they could not believe that Jē′ṣus would die. But they said nothing to any one, not even to the other disciples, of what they had seen upon the mountain.

When Jē′ṣus and the three disciples came down the mountain, they found many people around the other nine disciples. As the people saw Jē′ṣus they were filled with wonder, for some of the glory still remained upon his face; and they bowed before him. One man came to Jē′ṣus, and said:

"Master, look upon my son, my only child, and have mercy upon him; for he is terribly troubled by an evil spirit. At times he cannot speak, and then he will cry out suddenly. The spirit almost tears him in pieces; and makes him fall into the fire, and into the water. He foams at the mouth; and grinds his teeth, and pines away. And I spoke to your disciples, but they could not cast out the evil spirit."

And Jē′ṣus said:

"O ye people without faith, and wandering from God, how long must I be with you? how long must I bear with you? Bring your child to me."

While they were bringing the boy to Jē′ṣus, the evil spirit in him threw him down; and seemed to tear him apart; and he lay suffering and rolling on the ground. Jē′ṣus said to the boy's father:

"How long is it since this came to him?"

The father said, "Ever since he was a little child; but if you can do anything, have mercy on us and help us!"

"If I can!" said Jē′ṣus. "Do you not know that all things are possible to the one that believes in me?"

At once the father of the child cried out, "Lord, I believe! Help my lack of faith!"

Then Jē′ṣus spoke to the evil spirit in the boy:

"Dumb and deaf spirit, come out of this child, and never again enter into him!"

Then the spirit gave a cry, and came out, and left the child as one dead on the ground. Indeed, many who looked at him said, "He is dead!"

But Jē′ṣus took him by the hand and lifted him up; and the boy stood up well, set free from the evil spirit; and Jē′ṣus gave him to his father. And all who saw it wondered at the mighty power of the Lord.

When Jē′ṣus was in the house, his disciples asked him, "Why could not we cast out the evil spirit?"

And Jē′ṣus said to them, "Because you were wanting in faith. But this kind of evil spirits can be sent out only through prayer and fasting."

While all were wondering at the great things which Jē′ṣus did he said again to his disciples:

"Let what I say to you sink down into your hearts. The time is coming when the Son of man shall be given into the hands of men; and they shall kill him; and after he is killed, on the third day he shall rise again."

But they could not understand what he meant by these words; and they were afraid to ask him.

Story Twenty-two

THE LITTLE CHILD IN THE ARMS OF JESUS

Matthew xvii : 24, to xviii : 35; Mark ix : 33 to 48; Luke ix : 46 to 50.

FROM Çæs-a-rē′ȧ Phĭ-lĭp′pī, in the far north, Jē′şus went with his disciples through Găl′ĭ-lee, but not, as at other times, with a great multitude following him. At this time Jē′şus wished no one to know of his coming, for he had already preached to this people, and now he sought to be alone with his disciples. They came to Cȧ-pẽr′na-ŭm; and while they were there the officer to whom the Jewş paid the tax of half a shekel, or about thirty cents, for each man, said to Pē′tẽr, "Does not your Master pay the half-shekel?"

Pē′tẽr said, "Yes." But when Pē′tẽr came into the house, Jē′şus said to Pē′tẽr, "Sī′mon, do the kings of the earth take taxes of their own children, or of strangers?"

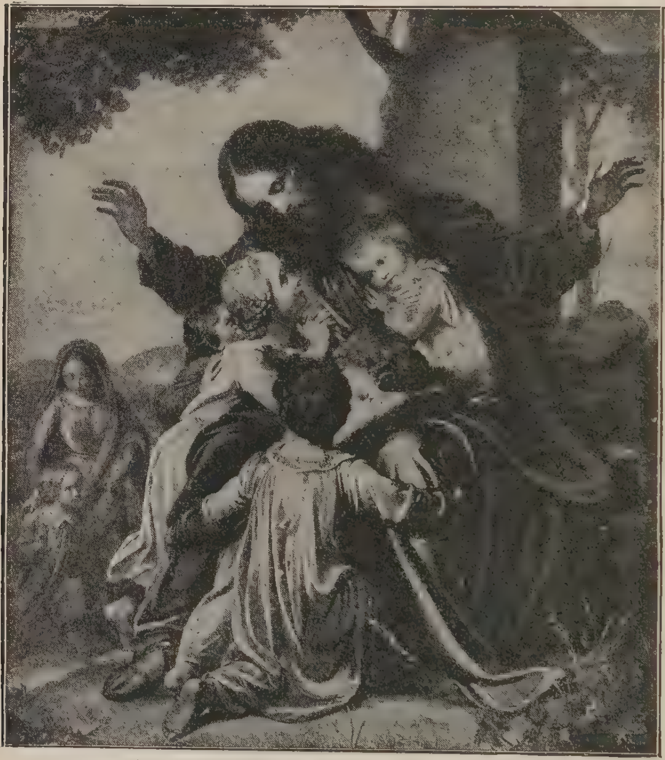
Pē′tẽr said to him, "Of strangers, not of their own children."

And Jē′şus said, "Then the children of the King should be free from the tax. But that we may not cause trouble, do you go to the lake, and cast in a hook, and pull up the first fish that comes; and when you have opened his mouth you shall find in it a piece of money. Take that, and pay it to them for you and for me."

While Jē′şus was in the house, he said to his disciples, "What was it that you were talking about among yourselves while you were on the way?"

They looked at one another, and said nothing; for on the way they had been disputing as to who of them should have the highest places in their Lord's kingdom. Then Jē′şus said to them, "If any one among you wishes to be first, let him be willing to be the last of all, and to be a servant of all."

And Jē′şus took a little child in his arms, and held him up before all his disciples, and said to them, "Unless you turn from your ways, and become like little children in spirit, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoever shall be gentle and lowly and willing to be taught, like this little child, he shall be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever shall receive one such little child for my sake, he receives me. Take care not to despise one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always look upon the face of my Father who is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost; and it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." And Pē'tēr said to Jē'ṣus, "Lord, how many times should I forgive a brother when he has sinned against me? Till seven times?"



JĒ'ṢUS TAKES A LITTLE CHILD IN HIS ARMS.

Jē'ṣus said to Pē'tēr, "I do not say that you should forgive him seven times only, but seventy times seven."

Then Jē'ṣus gave to his disciples the parable or story of the Unkind Servant:

"There was once a king who had an account made with his servants of how much money they owed him. One servant was brought before the king; and he owed the king a great sum of money, ten millions of dollars. The man had nothing with which to pay his debt, and the king commanded that the man, and his wife, and his children should be sold as slaves for the debt. Then the servant fell down before the king, and said, 'Be patient with me; give me time, and I will pay all that I owe!'

"Then the king felt a pity for his servant, set him free, and let him go without any payment, giving him all that he owed.

"But that servant went out and found another servant who owed him a small sum, only ten dollars. He came to this man, and took hold of him by the throat, and said, 'Pay what you owe me!' The man fell down before him, and said, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you!' He would not wait for the man to earn the money, but threw the man in prison, to stay there until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-servants heard of what had been done, they were sorry for the poor debtor in prison, and came and told the king all that had been done. Then the king sent for the servant, and said to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all your debt when you asked me to give you time. And you should have had mercy on your fellow-servant, just as I had mercy on you!' And the king was angry against the unkind servant, and sent him to prison, and ordered that he should be made to suffer until he should pay all his debt. So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if from your hearts you do not forgive your brothers who have sinned against you."

Story Twenty-three

AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Matthew viii : 19 to 22; Luke ix : 57 to 62; x : 38 to 42; xvii : 11 to 19; John vii : 2 to 52.

IN the fall of every year there was held at Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm "The Feast of Tabernacles." It was kept to remind the people of the time when the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes came out of Ē′ġy̆pt and lived for forty years in the wilderness, more than a thousand years before the days when Jē′şus was on the earth. At this feast the people from all parts of the land came up to Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm, and worshipped in the Temple. And as the Ĭş′ra-el-ītes had lived in tents in the wilderness, the people during the feast did not sleep in-doors, but made arbors and huts from green boughs on the roofs of the houses, and on the hills around the city, and slept in them at night.

Jē′şus and his disciples went from Găl′ĭ-lee to Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm to attend this feast. Just as Jē′şus was leaving, a man who had heard Jē′şus said to him, "Master, I will follow thee wherever thou goest."

And Jē′şus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has not a place where he can lay his head."

There was another man to whom Jē′şus had said, "Follow me." This man said, "Lord, let me go and bury my father, who is very old and must die very soon, and then I will follow thee."

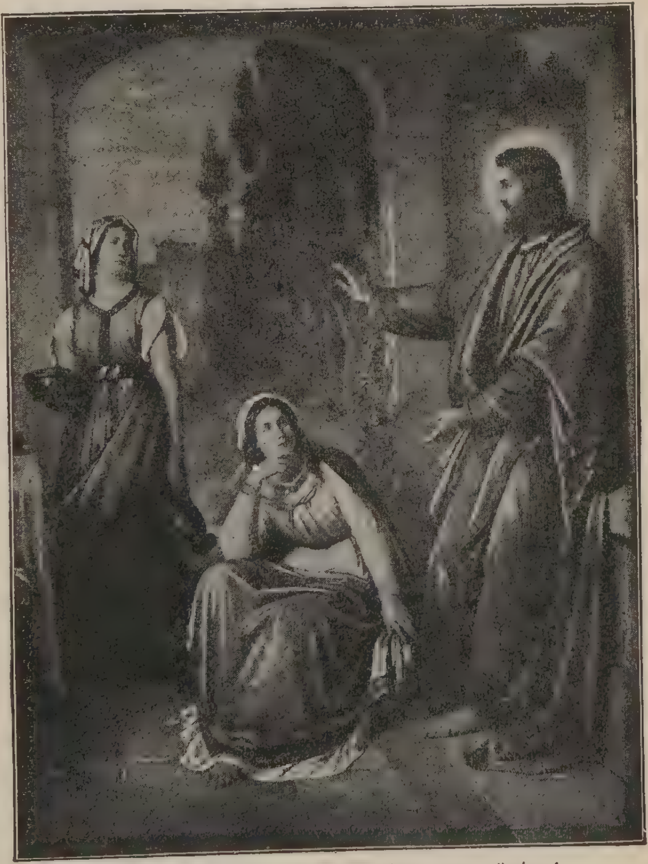
Jē′şus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but do you go and preach the kingdom of God."

And another said, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go home and say 'good-bye' to those who are in my house."

Jē′şus said to him, "No man who has put his hand to the plow, and looks back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

On his way to Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm Jē′şus went through the country of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, where the people hated the Jewş. In one place the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş would not let Jē′şus and his disciples come into their village, because they saw that they were Jewș going up to Jė-rụ'să-lĕm. The disciples were very angry at such treatment of their Master; and Jāmeș and Jŏhn said to him, "Lord, shall we call down fire from heaven, to destroy this village, as Ē-lī'jah the prophet did once?"

But Jē'șus would not allow them to do this to their enemies. He said to them, "Your spirit is not the spirit of my kingdom. The son of man has not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."



JĒ'ȘUS AT THE HOME OF MĀ'RȲ AND MÄR'THȦ.

And they went to another village to find a resting place. At one town they met outside the gate ten men with the dreadful disease of leprosy, of which we read in the Story of Nā'a-man. These men had heard of Jē'șus and his power to heal; and when they saw him they cried out aloud, "Jē'șus, Master, have mercy on us!"

Jē'șus said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests."

If ever a leper became well, he went to the priest, and offered a sacrifice, and then was allowed to go to his home. These men obeyed the word of Jē′şus, believing that he would cure them; and as soon as they started to go to the priests they found that they were already well. All but one of the men went on their way, but one returned, and came back to Jē′şus, and fell at his feet, giving praise to God; and this man was not a Jew, but a Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tan. Jē′şus said as he saw him, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there none who came back to give glory to God, except this stranger?"

Then he said to the man, "Rise up, and go your way; your faith has saved you."

Jē′şus came to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm not on the first day of the feast, but in the middle, for the feast was held for a week. He stood in the Temple, and taught the people, and all wondered at his words. On the last and greatest day of the feast, when they were bringing water and pouring it out in the Temple, Jē′şus cried aloud, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink! He that believes on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water."

While Jē′şus was teaching in Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm he often went out of the city to the village of Bĕth′a-nȳ̆, on the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş. There he stayed with the family of Mär′tha, her sister Mā′rȳ̆, and their brother Lăz′a-rŭs. These were friends of Jē′şus, and he loved to be with them. One day, while Jē′şus was at the house, Mā′rȳ̆ sat at the feet of Jē′şus, listening to his words; but Mär′thȧ was busy with work, and full of cares. Mär′thȧ came to Jē′şus, and said, "Master, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work? Tell her to come and help me!"

But Jē′şus said to her, "Mär′thȧ, Mär′thȧ, you are anxious and troubled about many things. Only one thing is needful; for Mā′rȳ̆ has chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her."

Story Twenty-four

THE MAN WITH CLAY ON HIS FACE

John ix : 1 to 41.

ONE Sabbath-day, as Jē′şus and his disciples were walking in Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, they met a blind man begging. This man in all his life had never seen, for he had been born blind. The disciples said to Jē′şus, as they were passing him, "Master, whose fault was it that this man was born blind? Was it because he has sinned, or did his parents sin?"

For the Jewş thought that when any evil came, it was caused by some one's sin. But Jē′şus said, "This man was born blind, not because of his parents' sin, nor because of his own; but so that God might show his power in him. We must do God's work while it is day; for the night is coming when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

When Jē′şus had said this he spat on the ground, and mixed up the spittle with earth, making a little lump of clay. This clay Jē′şus spread on the eyes of the blind man, and then he said to him, "Go and wash in the pool of Sī-lō′am."

The pool of Sī-lō′am was a large cistern or reservoir on the southeast of Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, outside the wall, where the valley of Ḡī′hon and the valley of the Çē′dron come together. To go to this pool the blind man, with two great blotches of mud on his face, must walk through the streets of the city, out of the gate, and into the valley. He went, and felt his way down the steps into the pool of Sī-lō′am. There he washed, and then at once his lifelong blindness passed away, and he could see. When the man came back to the part of the city where he lived, his neighbors could scarcely believe that he was the same man. They said, "Is not this the man who used to sit on the street begging?"

"This must be the same man," said some; but others said, "No, it is some one who looks like him."

But the man said, "I am the very same man who was blind!"

"Why, how did this come to pass?" they asked him. "How were your eyes opened."

"The man called Jē'şus," he answered, "mixed clay, and put it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Sī-lō'am and wash,' and I went and washed, and then I could see."

"Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I do not know," said the man.

Some of the Phăr'ĭ-seeş, the men who made a show of always obeying the law, asked the man how he had been made to see. He said to them, as he had said before, "A man put clay on my eyes, and I washed and my sight came to me."

Some of the Phăr'ĭ-seeş said, "The man who did this is not a man of God, because he does not keep the Sabbath. He makes clay, and puts it on men's eyes, working on the Sabbath-day. He is a sinner."

THE POOL OF SĪ-LŌ'AM AS SEEN TO-DAY.

Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such wonderful works?" And thus the people were divided in what they thought of Jē'şus. They asked the man who had been blind, "What do you think of this man who has opened your eyes?"

"He is a prophet of God!" said the man.

But the leading Jewş would not believe that this man had gained his sight until they had sent for his father and his mother. The Jewş asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How is it that he can now see?"

His parents were afraid to tell all they knew; for the Jewş had agreed that if any man should say that Jē'şus was the Christ, the Saviour, he should be turned out of the synagogue, and not be allowed to worship any more with the people. So his parents said to the Jewş, "We know that this is our son, and we know that he was born blind. But how he was made to see we do not know, or who has opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him, and let him speak for himself." Then again the rulers of the Jewş called the man who had been blind; and they said to him, "Give God the praise for your sight. We know that this man who made clay on the Sabbath-day is a sinner."

"Whether that man is a sinner or not, I do not know," answered the man; "but one thing I do know, that once I was blind, and now I see." They said to him again, "What did this man do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

"I have told you already, and you would not listen," said the man. "Why do you wish to hear it again? Do you intend to believe in him and be his followers?"

This made them very angry, and they said to the man," "You are his follower; but we are followers of Mō'şeş. We know that God spoke to Mō'şeş; but as for this fellow, we do not even know from what place he comes!"

The man said, "Why, that is a very wonderful thing! You who are teachers of the people, do not know who this man is, or from what place he comes; and yet he has had power to open my eyes! We know that God does not hear sinners; but God hears only those who worship him and do his will. Never before has any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could not do such works as these!"

The rulers of the Jewş, these Phăr'ĭ-seeş, then said to the man, "You were born in sin; and do you try to teach us?"

And they turned him out of the synagague, and would not let him worship with them. Jē'şus heard of this; and when Jē'şus found him he said to him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?"

The man said, "And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?" "You have seen him," said Jē'şus, "and it is he who now talks with you!"

The man said, "Lord, I believe." And he fell down before Jē'şus and worshipped him.

Story Twenty-five

THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE GOOD SAMARITAN

John x : 1 to 41; Luke x : 1 to 37.

AFTER the cure of the man born blind, Jē′ṣus gave to the people in Jē-rụ′sȧ-lĕm the parable or story of "The Good Shepherd."

"Verily, verily (that is, "in truth, in truth"), I say to you, if any one does not go into the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, it is a sign that he is a thief and a robber. But the one who comes in by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. The porter opens the door to him, and the sheep know him, and listen to his call, for he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out to the pasture-field. And when he has led out his sheep, he goes in front of them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. The sheep will not follow a stranger, for they do not know the stranger's voice."

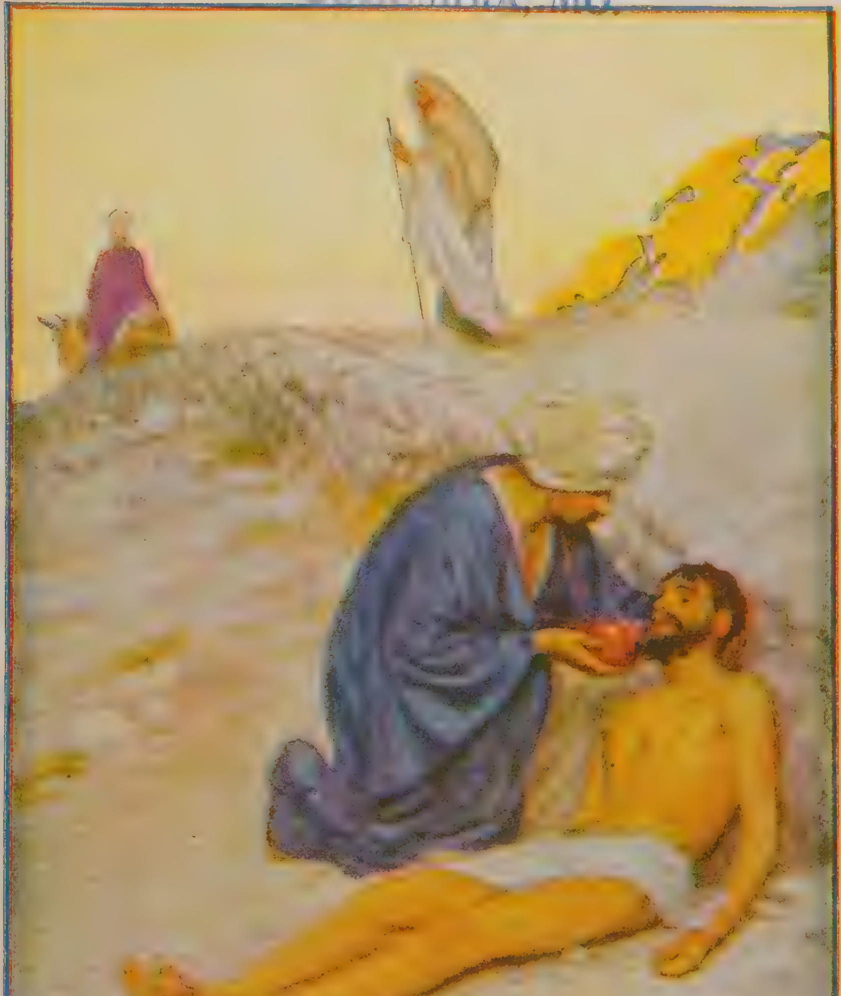
The people did not understand what all this meant, and Jē′ṣus explained it to them. He said:

"Verily, verily, I say to you, I am the door that leads to the sheepfold. If any one comes to the sheep in any other way than through me and in my name, he is a thief and a robber; but those who are the true sheep will not hear such. I am the door; if any man goes into the fold through me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.

"The thief comes to the fold that he may steal, and rob the sheep and kill them; but I come to the fold that they may have life, and may have all that they need. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd will give up his life to save his sheep; and I will give up my life that my sheep may be saved.

"I am the good shepherd; and just as a true shepherd knows all the sheep in his flock, so I know my own, and my own know

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN AIDING THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN ROBBED

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

me, even as I know the Father, and the Father knows me; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must lead, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

The Jewş could not understand these words of Jē′şus; but they became very angry with him, because he spoke of God as his Father. They took up stones to throw at him, and tried to seize him, intending to kill him. But Jē′şus escaped from their hands, and went away to the land beyond Jôr′dan, at the place called Bĕth-ab′a-rȧ, or "Bĕth′a-ny̆ beyond Jôr′dan," the same place where he had been baptized by Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst more than two years before. From this place Jē′şus wished to go out through the land on the east of the Jôr′dan, a land which was called "Pe-rē′ȧ," a word that means "beyond." But before going out himself through this land, Jē′şus sent out seventy chosen men from among his followers to go to all the villages, and to make the people ready for his own coming afterward. He gave to these seventy the same commands that he had given to the twelve disciples, when he sent them through Găl′ĭ-lee, and sent them out in pairs, two men to travel and to preach together. He said:

"I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no bag for food, no shoes except those that you are wearing. Do not stop to talk with people by the way; but go through the towns and the villages, healing the sick, and preaching to the people, 'The kingdom of God is coming.' He that hears you, hears me; and he that refuses you, refuses me; and he that will not hear me, will not hear him that sent me."

And after a time the seventy men came again to Jē′şus, saying, "Lord, even the evil spirits obey our words in thy name!"

And Jē′şus said to them, "I saw Sā′tan, the king of the evil spirits, falling down like lightning from heaven. I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions; and nothing shall harm you. Still, do not rejoice because the evil spirits obey you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." And at that time, one of the scribes,—men who wrote copies of the books of the Old Testament, and studied them, and taught them,—came to Jē′şus and asked him a question, to see what answer he would give. He said, "Master, what shall I do to have everlasting life?"

Jē′ṣus said to the scribe, "What is written in the law? You are a reader of God's law; tell me what it says?"

Then the man gave this answer, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Jē′ṣus said to the man, "You have answered right; do this, and you shall have everlasting life."

But the man was not satisfied. He asked another question, "And who is my neighbor?"

To answer this question, Jē′ṣus gave the parable or story of "The Good Sā-măr′ĭ-tan." He said, "A certain man was going down the lone road from Jė-rụ′sā-lĕm to Jĕr′ĭ-chō; and he fell among robbers, who stripped him of all that he had, and beat him; and then went away, leaving him almost dead. It happened that a certain priest was going down that road; and when he saw the man lying there, he passed by on the other side. And a Lē′vīte also, when he came to the place, and saw the man, he, too, went by on the other side. But a certain Sā-măr′ĭ-tan, as he was going down, came where this man was; and as soon as he saw him he felt a pity for

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

him. He came to the man, and dressed his wounds, pouring oil and wine into them. Then he lifted him up, and set him on his own beast of burden, and walked beside him to an inn. There he took care of him all night; and the next morning he took out from his purse two shillings, and gave them to the keeper of the inn, and said, 'Take care of him; and if you need to spend more than this, do so; and when I come again I will pay it to you.'

"Which one of these three do you think showed himself a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"

The scribe said, "The one who showed mercy on him."

Then Jē′şus said to him, "Go and do thou likewise."

By this parable Jē′şus showed that "our neighbor" is the one who needs the help that we can give him, whoever he may be.

Story Twenty-six

LAZARUS RAISED TO LIFE

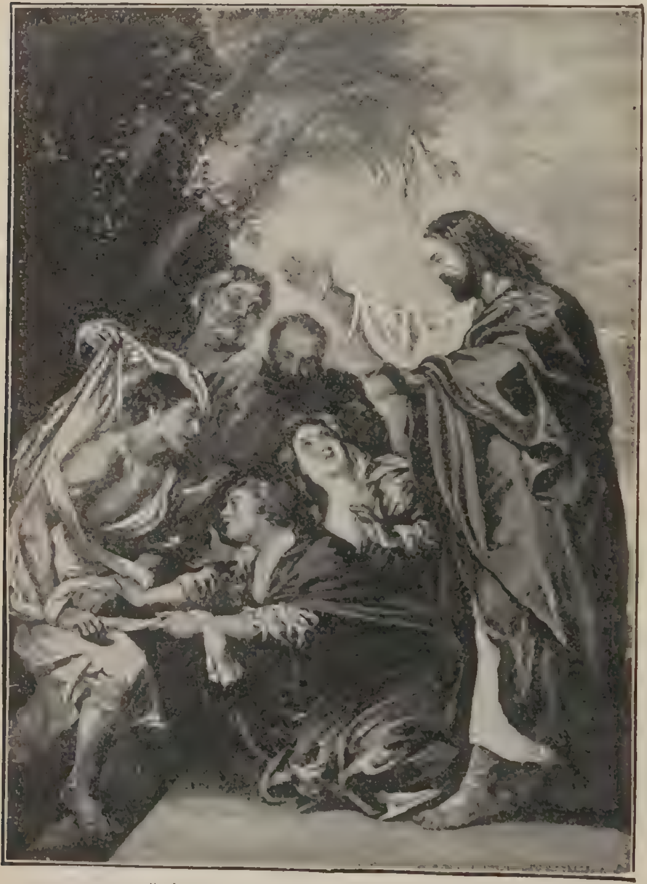
John xi : 1 to 55.

WHILE Jē′şus was at Bĕth-ab′a-rȧ beyond Jôr′dan, and ready to begin preaching in the land of Pe-rē′ȧ, he was suddenly called back to the village of Bĕth′a-ny̆, on the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş, near Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. You remember that Mär′thȧ, and Mā′ry̆, and Lăz′a-rŭs, the friends of Jē′şus, were living in this place.

The word came to Jē′şus that Lăz′a-rŭs was very ill. But Jē′şus did not hurry away from Bĕth-ab′a-rȧ to go to Bĕth′a-ny̆. He stayed two days, and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go again into Jū′dē-ȧ, near Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm."

The disciples said to Jē′şus, "Master, when we were in Jū-dē′ȧ last the people tried to stone you and to kill you; and now would you go there again?"

Jē'şus said, "Our friend Lăz'a-rŭs has fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep." The disciples said, "Master, if he has fallen asleep, he may be well."



LĂZ'A-RŬS COMES TO LIFE AGAIN.

For they thought that Jē'şus was speaking of taking rest in sleep; but Jē'şus meant that Lăz'a-rŭs was dead. Then Jē'şus said to them, "Lăz'a-rŭs is dead; and I am glad that I was not there to keep him alive; for now you will be led to believe in me all the more fully. But let us now go to him."

Then one of the disciples, named Thŏm'as, said to the others, "Let us also go, and die with our Master!"

So Jē'şus left Bĕth-ab'a-rȧ with his disciples, and came to Bĕth'-a-nȳ; and then he found Lăz'a-rŭs had been buried four days. Many of the Jewş had come to comfort Mär'thȧ and Mā'rȳ in the loss of their brother. They told Mär'thȧ that Jē'şus was coming, and she went to meet him, but Mā′rȳ sat still in the house. As soon as Mär′thȧ saw Jē′ṣus, she said to him very sadly, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother need not have died. And even now, I know that God will give you whatever you may ask."

Jē′ṣus said to her, "Your brother shall rise again."

"I know that he shall rise," said Mär′thȧ, "when the last day comes, and all the dead are raised."

Jē′ṣus said to her, "I am the resurrection, the raising from the dead; and I am the life. Whoever believes on me, even though he may die, he shall live; and whoever lives and believes on me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, the one who comes into the world."

Then Mär′thȧ went to her home, and said to her sister Mā′rȳ, but quietly, so that no other person heard her, "The Master is here, and he asks for you!"

At once Mā′rȳ rose up to go to Jē′ṣus. Her friends thought that she was going to her brother's tomb, and they went with her. Jē′ṣus was still at the place where Mär′thȧ had met him, near the village. When Mā′rȳ came to him, she fell down at his feet, and said, as her sister had said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother need not have died!"

When Jē′ṣus saw her weeping, and the Jewṣ weeping with her, he also was touched, and groaned in his spirit, and was filled with sorrow. He said, "Where have you laid him?"

They showed him the place where Lăz′a-rŭs was buried, a cave, with a stone laid upon the door. Jē′ṣus wept as he stood near it, and the Jewṣ said, "See how he loved Lăz′a-rŭs!"

But some of them said, "If this man could open the eyes of the blind, why is it that he could not keep this man whom he loved from dying?"

Jē′ṣus, standing before the cave, and still groaning within, said, "Take away the stone!"

Mär′thȧ said, "Lord, by this time his body has begun to decay, for he has been dead four days."

Jē′ṣus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?"

They took away the stone, as Jē′ṣus had commanded. Then Jē′ṣus lifted up his eyes toward heaven, and said:

"Father, I thank thee that thou didst hear me. I know that thou dost hear me always; but because of those who are standing here I spoke, so that they may believe that thou hast sent me."

Then, with a loud voice, Jē′ṣus called out, "Lăz′a-rŭs, come forth!"

And the man who had been four days dead came out of the tomb. His body, and hands, and feet were wrapped round and round with grave bands, and over his face was bound a napkin.

Jē′ṣus said to those standing near, "Loose him, and let him go!"

When they saw the wonderful power of Jē′ṣus in raising Lăz′a-rŭs to life many of the people believed in Jē′ṣus. But others went away and told the Phăr′ĭ-seeṣ and rulers what Jē′ṣus had done. They called a meeting of all the rulers, the great council of the Jewṣ, and they said, "What shall we do, for this man is doing many works of wonder? If we let him alone everybody will believe on him, and will try to make him the king; and then the Rō′manṣ will make war upon us and destroy our nation and our people."

But the high-priest Cā′ia-phăs said, "It is better for us that one man should die for the people than that our whole nation should be destroyed. Let us put this man to death."

And to this they agreed, and from that day all the rulers found plans to have Jē′ṣus slain. But Jē′ṣus knew their purpose, for he knew all things. His time to die had not yet come, and he went away with his disciples to a city near the wilderness and not far from Bĕth-ab′a-rȧ, where he had been before. And from this place he went forth to preach in the land of Pe-rē′ȧ, into which he had sent the seventy disciples, as we read in the last Story.

Story Twenty-seven

SOME PARABLES IN PEREA

Luke xii : 1, to xv : 32.

JĒ′ŞUS went with his disciples through the land of Pe-rē′ȧ, on the east of the Jôr′dan, the only part of the Ĭş′ra-el-īte country that he had not already visited. The people had heard of Jē′şus from the seventy disciples whom he had sent through the land, and in every place great multitudes of people came to see him and to hear him. At one time, one man called out of the crowd, and said to Jē′şus:

"Master, speak to my brother, and tell him to give me my share of what our father left us!"

Jē′şus said:

"Man, who made me a judge over you, to settle your disputes? Let both of you, and all of you, take care and keep from being covetous, seeking what is not yours."

Then Jē′şus gave to the people the parable or story of "The Rich Fool." He said:

"There was a rich farmer whose fields brought great harvests, until the rich man said to himself:

"'What shall I do? for I have no place where I can store up the fruits of my fields. This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns, and will build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have goods laid up enough to last for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry."'

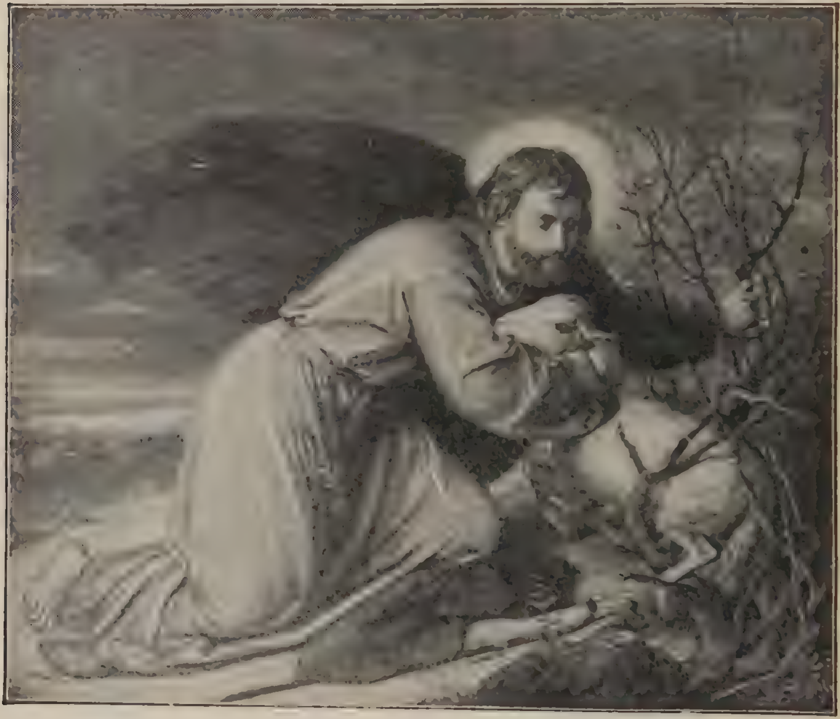
"But God said to the rich man, 'Thou foolish one; this night thou shalt die, and thy soul shall be taken away from thee. And the things which thou hast laid up; whose shall they be?'"

And Jē′şus said, "Such is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

On one Sabbath-day, Jē′şus was teaching in a synagogue. And a woman came in who for eighteen years had been bent forward, and could not stand up straight. When Jē′ṣus saw her, he called her, and said to her:

"Woman, you are set free from your trouble of body."

He laid his hands upon her; and she stood up straight, and praised God for his mercy. But the chief man in the synagogue was not pleased to see Jē′ṣus healing on the Sabbath. He spoke to the people, and said:



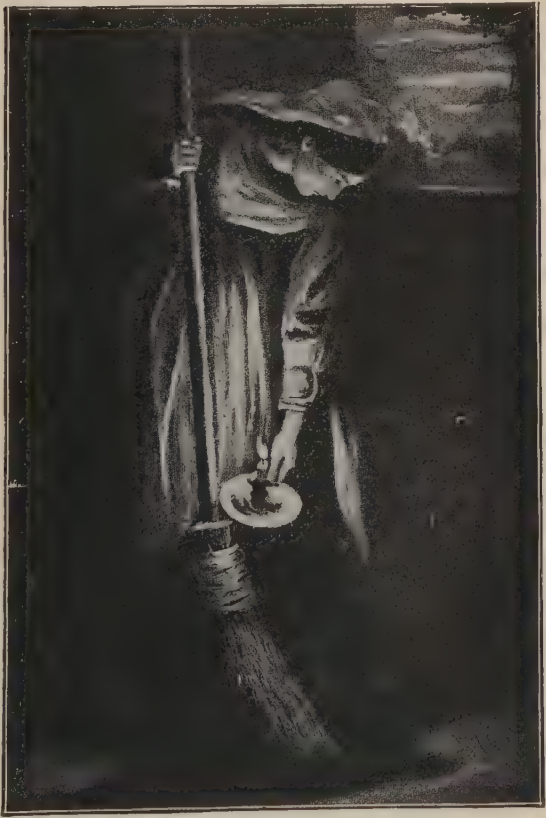
THE SHEPHERD GOES AFTER THE LOST SHEEP.

"There are six days when men ought to work; in them, you should come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day."

But Jē′ṣus said to him and to the others:

"Does not each one of you on the Sabbath-day loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to give him water? And should not this woman, a daughter of Ā′brā-hăm, who has been bound for eighteen years, be set free from her bonds on the Sabbath-day?"

And the enemies of Jē′ṣus could say nothing; while all the people were glad at the glorious works which he did.



THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER.

At one place Jē′ṣus was invited to a dinner. He said to the one who had invited him:

"When you make a dinner or a supper, do not invite your friends, or your rich neighbors; for they will invite you in return. But when you make a feast, invite the poor, the helpless, the lame and the blind; for they cannot invite you again; but God will give you a reward in his own time."

And there went with Jē′ṣus great multitudes of people; and he turned, and said to them:

"If any man comes after me, he must love me more than he loves his own father, and his mother, and wife and children, yes, and his own life also; or else he cannot be my disciple.

"For who of you, wishing to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he will be able to finish? For if after he has laid the foundation, and then leaves it unfinished, every one who passes by will laugh at him, and say, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'

"Or what king going out to meet another king in war, will not sit down first, and find whether he is able with ten thousand men to meet the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if he finds that he cannot meet him, while he is yet a great way off, he sends his messengers and asks for peace.

"Even so, every one of you must give up all that he has, if he would be my disciple."

While Jē'ṣus was teaching, many of the publicans, those who took up the taxes from the people, came to hear him; and many others who were called "sinners" by the Phăr'ĭ-seeṣ and the Scribes. The enemies of Jē'ṣus said:

"This man likes to have sinners come to see him, and he eats with them."

Then Jē'ṣus spoke a parable called "The Lost Sheep," to show why he was willing to talk with sinners. He said:

"What man of you, who has a hundred sheep; if one of them is lost, does not leave his ninety and nine sheep in the field, and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, glad to see his lost sheep again. And when he comes home he calls together his friends and neighbors, and says to them:

"'Be glad with me; for I have found my sheep that was lost!'

"Even so," said Jē'ṣus, "there is joy in heaven over one sinner who has turned to God, more than over ninety and nine good men, who do not need to turn from their sins."

Jē'ṣus gave to the people also the parable of "The Lost Piece of Money." He said:

"If any woman has ten pieces of silver, and loses one piece, will she not light a lamp, and sweep her house carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and her neighbors, saying:

"'Be glad with me; for I have found the piece of silver that I had lost.'

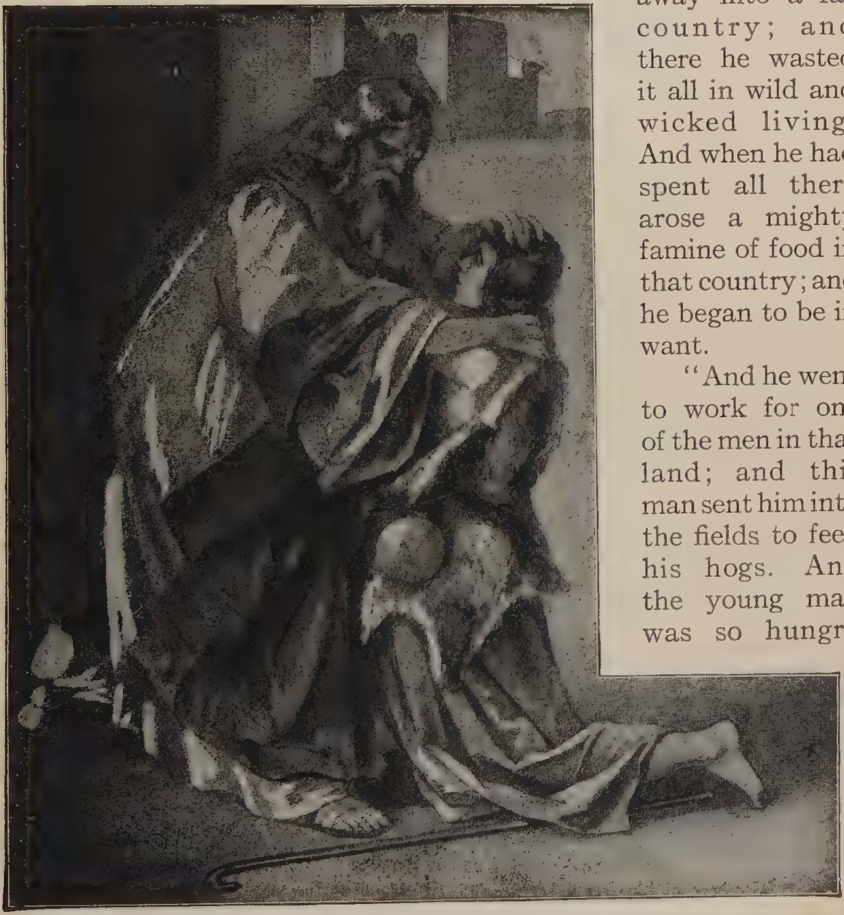
"Even so, there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that turns from his sins."

Then Jē'ṣus told another parable, that one called "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." A prodigal is one who spends everything that he has, as did the young man in this parable. Jē'ṣus said, "There was once a man who had two sons. The younger of his sons said to his father:

"'Father, give to me the share that will come to me, of what you own.'

"Then the father divided all that he had between his two sons; and not many days after the younger son took his share, and went away into a far country; and there he wasted it all in wild and wicked living. And when he had spent all there arose a mighty famine of food in that country; and he began to be in want.

"And he went to work for one of the men in that land; and this man sent him into the fields to feed his hogs. And the young man was so hungry that he would have filled himself with the husks that were fed to the hogs; and no one gave anything to him. At last the young man began to think of his father's house; and he said to himself:



THE FATHER FELL ON HIS SON'S NECK.

“‘‘How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, while I am dying here with hunger! I will arise, and will go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I am no more worthy to be called your son; let me be one of your hired servants.”’

“And he rose up, to go back to his father’s house. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him:

“‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight. I am no more worthy to be called your son——’

“But before he could say any more, his father called to the servants, and said:

“‘Bring out quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called to him one of the servants, and asked what these things might be. And the servant said to him:

“‘Your brother has come; and your father has killed the fatted calf, and is having a feast, because he is at home safe and sound.’

“But the elder brother was angry, and would not go in; and his father came out and urged him. But he answered his father, and said:

“‘I have served you for these many years; and I have never disobeyed your commands; and yet you never gave me even a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this your son has come, who has wasted your living with wicked people, you killed for him the fatted calf!’

“And the father said to him:

“‘My son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. But it was fitting that we should make merry and be glad; for this your brother was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

By these parables Jē′ṣus showed that he came not to seek those who thought themselves so good that they did not need him; but those who were the sinful and the needy.

Story Twenty-eight

THE POOR RICH MAN, AND THE RICH POOR MAN

Luke xvi : 1 to 31, to xviii : 1 to 34; Matthew xix : 13 to 30; xx : 17 to 19; Mark x : 13 to 34.

ANOTHER parable that Jē′şus gave was that of "The Rich Man and Lăz′a-rŭs." He said:

"There was a rich man; and he was dressed in garments of purple and fine linen, living every day in splendor. And at the gate leading to his house was laid a beggar named Lăz′a-rŭs, covered with sores, and seeking for his food the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs of the street came and licked his sores.

"After a time the beggar died, and his soul was carried by the angels into Ā′bră-hăm's bosom. The rich man also died, and his body was buried. And in the world of the dead he lifted up his eyes, being in misery; and far away he saw Ā′bră-hăm, and Lăz′a-rŭs resting in his bosom. And he cried out and said, 'Father Ā′bră-hăm, have mercy on me, and send Lăz′a-rŭs, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering in this flame!'

"But Ā′bră-hăm said, 'Son, remember that you had your good things in your lifetime, and that Lăz′a-rŭs had his evil things; but now here he is comforted and you are in sufferings. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that no one may cross over from us to you, and none can come from your place to us.'

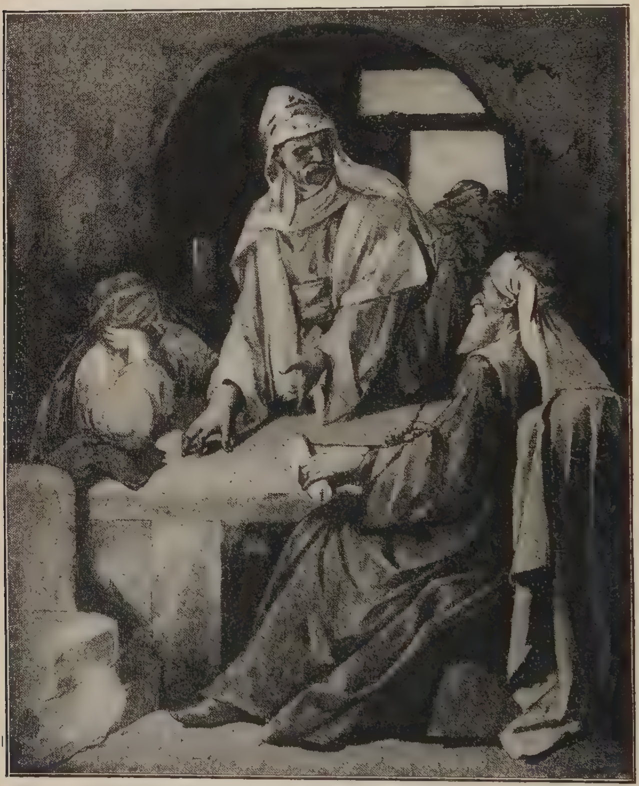
"And he said, 'I pray, O father Ā′bră-hăm, if Lăz′a-rŭs cannot come to me, command that he be sent to my father's house, for I have five brothers, and let him speak to them, so that they will not come to this place of torment.'

"But Ā′bră-hăm said, 'They have Mō′şeş and the prophets; let them hear them!'

"And he said, 'O father Ā'bră-hăm, if one should go to them from the dead, they will turn to God.'

"And Ā'bră-hăm said, 'If they will not hear Mō'şeş and the prophets, they will not believe, even though one should rise from the dead!'"

And this was true, for as the people would not listen to the words of Mō'şeş and the prophets about Christ, they would not believe, even after Jē'şus himself arose from the dead. There was another parable of Jē'şus, called "The Unjust Steward.'



THE UNJUST STEWARD.

"A certain rich man had a steward, a man who took the care of all his possessions. He heard that his steward was wasting his property; and he sent for him, and said, 'What is this that I hear about you? You shall soon give up your place, and be my steward no longer.'

"Then the steward said to himself, 'In a few days I shall lose my place; and what shall I do? I cannot work in the fields, and I am ashamed to go begging from door to door. But I have thought of a plan that will give me friends, so that when I am put out of my place, some people will take me into their houses, because of what I have done for them.'

"And this was his plan. He sent for the men who were in debt to his master, and said to the first one, 'How much do you owe to my master?'

"The man said, 'I owe him a thousand gallons of oil.'

"Then said the steward, 'You need only pay five hundred gallons.' Then to another he said, 'How much do you owe?'

"The man answered, 'I owe fifteen hundred bushels of wheat.' And the steward said to him, 'You need pay only twelve hundred bushels.'

"When his master heard of this which his steward had done, he said, 'That is a sharp, shrewd man, who takes care of himself.'"

And Jē′şus said, "Be as earnest and as thoughtful for the eternal life as men are for this present life."

Jē′şus did not approve the actions of this unjust steward, but he told his disciples to learn some good lessons even from his wrong deeds.

Jē′şus spoke another parable to show that people should pray always, and not be discouraged. It was the parable of "The Unjust Judge and the Widow." Jē′şus said:

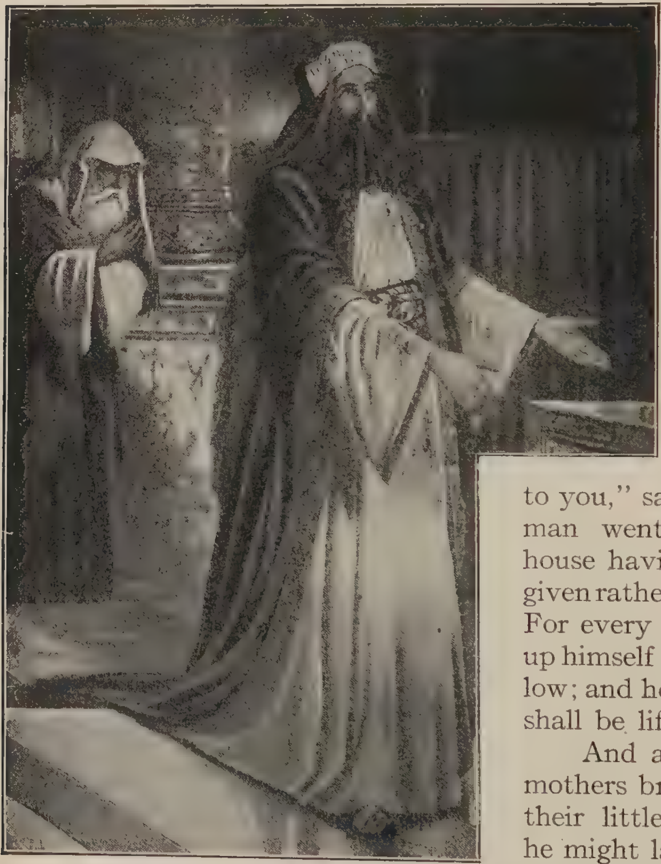
"There was in a city a judge who did not fear God, nor seek to do right; nor did he care for man. And there was a poor widow in that city who had suffered wrong. She came to him over and over again, crying out, 'Do justice for me against my enemy who has done me wrong!'

"And for a time the judge, because he did not care for the right, would do nothing. But as the widow kept on crying, at last he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor care for man, yet because this widow troubles me and will not be still, I will give her justice, or else she will wear me out by her continual crying.'

And the Lord said, "Hear what this unjust judge says! And will not a just God do right for his own who cry to him by day and night, even though he may seem to wait long? I tell you that he will answer their prayer, and will answer it soon!"

And Jē′şus spoke another parable to some who thought that they were righteous and holy, and set others at nought. This was the parable of "The Phăr′ĭ-see and the Publican."

"Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Phăr′ĭ-see, the other a publican. The Phăr′ĭ-see stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are. I do not rob, I do not deal unjustly. I am free from wickedness. I am not even like this publican. I fast twice in each week. I give to God one-tenth of all that I have.' But the publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!'


THE PHĂR′Ĭ-SEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

"I say unto you," said Jē′ṣus, "this man went down to his house having his sins forgiven rather than the other. For every one that lifteth up himself shall be brought low; and he that is humble shall be lifted up."

And at this time the mothers brought to Jē′ṣus their little children, that he might lay his hands on them and bless them. The disciples were not pleased at this, and told them to take their children away. But Jē′ṣus called them to him, and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter into it." And he put his hands on them and blessed them.

And a certain young man, a ruler, came running to Jē′şus, and said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may have everlasting life?"

"Why do you call me good?" said Jē′şus. "No one is good except one, that is God. You know the commandments; keep them."

"What commandments?" asked the young man.

"Do not kill; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not bear false witness; honor thy father and mother."

The young man said, "All these I have kept from my youth up. What do I need more than these?"

"One thing more you need to do," said Jē′şus. "Go sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me."

But when he heard this he turned and went away very sad, for he was very rich. And when Jē′şus saw this, he said, "How hard it is for those that are rich to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

At this the disciples were filled with wonder. They said, "If that be so, then who can be saved?"

And Jē′şus said, "The things that are impossible with men are possible with God."

And Pē′tẽr said, "Lord, we have left our homes and all that we have, and have followed thee."

And Jē′şus answered him, "Verily, I say to you, there is no man who has left house, or wife, or brothers, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not have given to him many more times in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting."

Then Jē′şus again told his twelve disciples of what was soon to come to pass, even in a few weeks. He said, "We are going up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and there all the things written by the prophets about the Son of man shall come true. He shall be made a prisoner, and shall be mocked, and treated shamefully, and shall be spit upon, and beaten, and shall be killed; and then the third day he shall rise again."

But they could not understand these things, and they did not believe that their Master was to die.

Story Twenty-nine

JESUS AT JERICHO

Matthew xx : 20 to 34; Mark x : 35 to 52; Luke xviii; 35, to xix : 28.

JĒ′ŞUS was passing through the land of Pe-rē′ȧ on his way to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. His disciples were with him, and a great multitude of people, for again the feast of the Passover was near, and the people from all parts of the land were going up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm to take part in the feast; and although Jē′şus had said, over and over again, that he was to die in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, still many believed that in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm he would make himself king and would reign over all the land.

On one day Jāmeş and Jŏhn, two of the disciples of Jē′şus, who were brothers, the sons of Zĕb′e-dee, came to Jē′şus with their mother. She knelt before Jē′şus, and her two sons knelt beside her. Jē′şus said to her, "What is it that you would ask of me?"

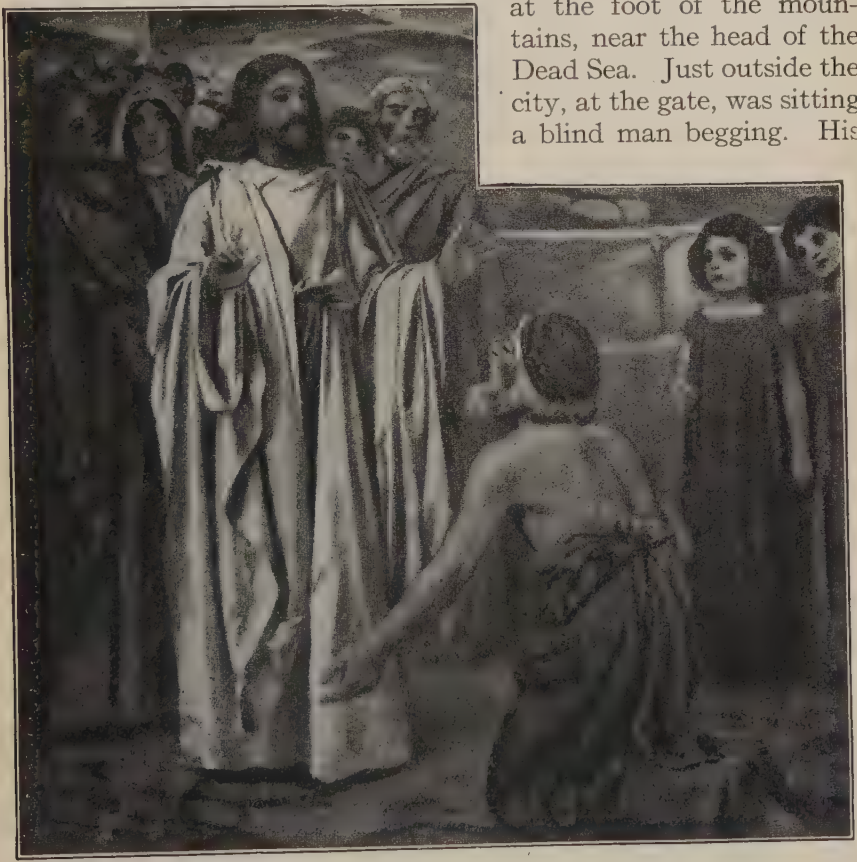
She said to him, "Lord, grant to me that my two sons may be allowed to sit beside thy throne, one on the right hand, the other on thy left, in thy kingdom."

"You do not know what you are asking," answered Jē′şus. "Are you able to drink of the cup that I am about to drink?"

By "the cup" he meant the suffering that he was soon to endure; but this they did not understand; and they said to him, "We are able."

He said to them, "My cup indeed you shall drink; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to those for whom God has made it ready."

When the other disciples heard that Jāmeş and Jŏhn had tried to get the promise of the highest places in the Lord's kingdom, they were very angry against these two brothers. But Jē′şus called them to him, and he said, "You know that the rulers of nations lord it over them; and their great ones are those who bear rule. But not so shall it be among you. For whoever among you would be great, let him serve the rest. For the Son of man himself did not come to be served, but to serve others; and to give up his life that he might save many." Jē′şus with his disciples and a great multitude drew nigh to Jĕr′ĭ-chō, which was at the foot of the mountains, near the head of the Dead Sea. Just outside the city, at the gate, was sitting a blind man begging. His name was Bär-ti-mae′us, which means "the son of Tī-mae′us." This man heard the noise of a crowd, and he asked what it meant. They said to him, "Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth is passing by." As soon as he heard this he began to cry out aloud, "Jē′şus, son of Dā′vid, have mercy on me!"



BLIND BÄR-TI-MAE′US.

Many people told him not to make so great a noise, but he cried all the louder, "Jē'ṣus, sọn of Dā'vid, have mercy on me!"

Jē'ṣus heard his cry, and stood still, and said, "Call the man to me!"

Then they came to the blind man and said, "Be of good cheer; rise up; he calls you!"

The blind man sprung up from the ground and threw away his garment, and came to Jē'ṣus. And Jē'ṣus said to him, "What do you wish me to do to you?"

"Lord, that I might have my sight given to me," answered blind Bär'ti-mae-us.

Then Jē'ṣus touched his eyes, and said, "Go your way; your faith has made you well."

Then immediately sight came to his eyes, and he followed Jē'ṣus, while all the people who saw it gave thanks to God.

There was another man in Jĕr'ĭ-chō who had heard of Jē'ṣus, and greatly longed to see him. This was a man named Zăc-chae'us. He was a chief man among the publicans, the men who gathered the taxes from the people, and whom all the people hated greatly. Zăc-chae'us was a rich man, for many of the publicans made great gains. Wishing to see Jē'ṣus, and being little in size, Zăc-chae'us ran on before the crowd, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree by the road, so that he might see Jē'ṣus as he passed by.

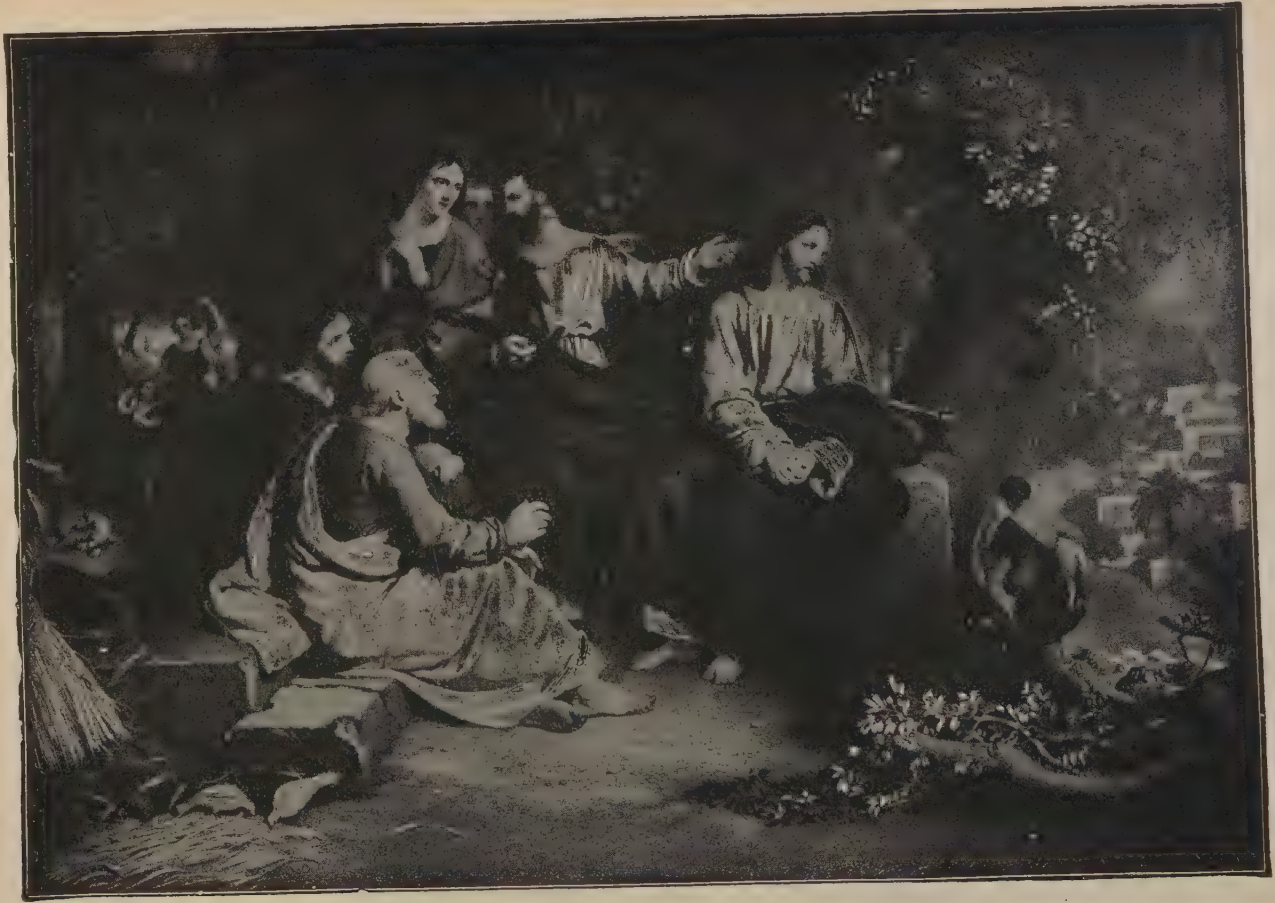
When Jē'ṣus came to the tree he stopped, and looked up, and called Zăc-chae'us by name, saying, "Zăc-chae'us, make haste and come down, for to-day I must stop in your house."

At this Zăc-chae'us was glad. He came down at once, and took Jē'ṣus into his house. But at this many of the people found fault. They said, "He has gone in to lodge with a man who is a sinner!"

Because he was a publican, they counted him as a sinner. But Zăc-chae'us stood before the Lord, and said, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongly taken anything from any man, I give him four times as much."

And Jē'ṣus said, "To-day salvation has come to this house; for this man also is a son of Ā'bră-hăm. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

Jē'ṣus was now drawing nigh to Jė-rụ'sȧ-lĕm, and all the people were expecting the kingdom of God to begin at once, with Jē'ṣus as its King. On this account, Jē'ṣus gave to the people "The Parable



JĒ'ŞUS ON THE MOUNT OF ŎL'ĪVEŞ LOOKING AT JĒ-RṲ'SÂ-LĔM.

of the Pounds," saying, "A certain nobleman went to a far country, expecting there to be made a king, and thence to return to his own land. Before going away he called ten servants of his, and gave to each one a pound of money, and said to them, 'Take care of this and trade with it until I come back.'

"But the people of his own land hated this nobleman, and sent messengers to the place where he had gone, to say, 'We are not willing that this man should be king over us.'

"But in the face of this message from the people, the nobleman received the crown and the kingdom, and then went back to his own land. When he had come home, he called his servants to whom he had given the pounds, so that he might know how much each had gained by trading. The first servant came before him, and said, 'Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more.'

"The king said to him, 'Well done, my good servant; because you have been found faithful in a very little, you shall bear rule over ten cities.'

"And the second came, saying, 'Your pound, lord, has made five pounds.' And his lord said to him, 'You shall be over five cities.'

"And another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your pound, which I have kept wrapped up in a napkin; for I feared you, because you are a harsh master; you take up what you did not lay down, and you reap what you did not sow.' He said to the servant, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you unfaithful servant. If you knew that I was a harsh master, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow, then why did you not put my money into the bank, so that when I came I should have had my own money and its gains?' And he said to those who were standing by, 'Take away from him the pound, and give it to him that has the ten pounds.'

"They said to him, 'Lord, he hath ten pounds already!'

"But the king said, 'Unto every one who cares for what he has, more shall be given; but the one who cares not for it, what he has shall be taken away from him.'

"And the king added, 'Those, my enemies, who would not have me to reign over them; bring them here, and slay them before me.'"

And after giving this parable Jē′ṣus went before his disciples up the mountains toward Jḗ-rụ′sȧ-lĕm.

Story Thirty

PALM SUNDAY

Matthew xxi : 1 to 11; xxvi : 6 to 16; Mark ii : 1 to 11; xiv : 3 to 11; Luke xix : 29 to 41; xxii : 3 to 6; John xii : 1 to 19.

FROM Jĕr′ĭ-chō, Jē′şus and his disciples went up the mountains, and came to Bĕth′a-nȳ, where his friends Mär′thȧ and Mā′rȳ lived, and where he had raised Lăz′a-rŭs to life. Many people in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm heard that Jē′şus was there; and they went out of the city to see him, for Bĕth′a-nȳ was only two miles from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. Some came also to see Lăz′a-rŭs, whom Jē′şus had raised from the dead; but the rulers of the Jewş said to each other:

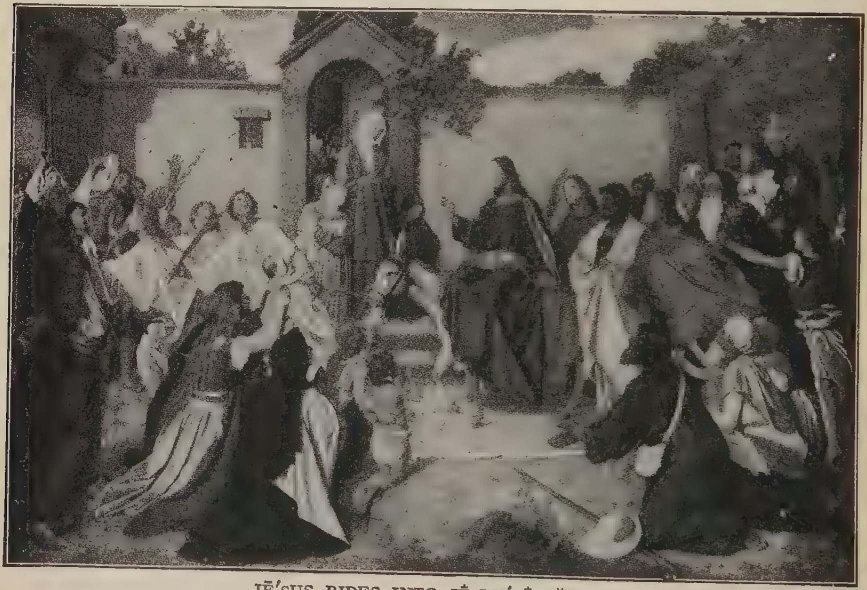
"We must not only kill Jē′şus, but Lăz′a-rŭs also, because on his account so many of the people are going after Jē′şus and are believing on him."

The friends of Jē′şus in Bĕth′a-nȳ made a supper for Jē′şus at the home of a man named Sī′mon. He was called "Sī′mon the Leper"; and perhaps he was one whom Jē′şus had cured of leprosy. Jē′şus and his disciples, with Lăz′a-rŭs, leaned upon the couches around the table, as the guests; and Mär′thȧ was one of those who waited upon them. While they were at the supper, Mā′rȳ, the sister of Lăz′a-rŭs, came into the room, carrying a sealed jar of very precious perfume. She opened the jar, and poured some of the perfume upon the head of Jē′şus, and some upon his feet, and she wiped his feet with her long hair. And the whole house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

But one of the disciples of Jē′şus, Jū′das Ĭs-căr′ĭ-ot, was not pleased at this. He said, "Why was such a waste of the perfume made? This might have been sold for more than forty-five dollars, and the money given to the poor!"

This he said, but not because he cared for the poor. Jū′das was the one who kept the bag of money for Jē′şus and the twelve, and he was a thief, and took away for his own use all the money that he could steal.

But Jē′ṣus said, "Let her alone; why do you find fault with the woman? She has done a good work upon me. You have the poor always with you, and whenever you wish you can give to them. But you will have me with you only a little while. She has done what she could; for she has come to perfume my body for its burial. And truly I say to you, that wherever the gospel shall be preached throughout all the world, what this woman has done shall be told in memory of her." Perhaps Mā′ry̆ knew what others did not believe, that Jē′ṣus was soon to die; and she showed her love for him, and her sorrow for his coming death, by this rich gift.



JĒ′ṢUS RIDES INTO JĒ̇-RṲ′SǠ-LĔM.

But Jū′das, the disciple who carried the bag, was very angry at Jē′ṣus; and from that time he was looking for a chance to betray Jē′ṣus, or to give him up to his enemies. He went to the chief priests, and said, "What will you give me if I will put Jē′ṣus into your hands?"

They said, "We will give you thirty pieces of silver."

And for thirty pieces of silver Jū'das promised to help them take Jē'ş̧us, and make him their prisoner.

On the morning after the supper at Bĕth'a-nў̆, Jē'şus called two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the next village, and at a place where two roads cross, and there you will find an ass tied, and a colt with it. Loose them, and bring them to me. And if any one says to you, 'Why do you do this?' say 'The Lord has need of them,' and they will let them go."

They went to the place, and found the ass and the colt, and were loosing them, when the owner said, "What are you doing, untying the ass?"

And they said, as Jē'şus had told them to say, "The Lord has need of it!"

Then the owner gave them the ass and the colt for the use of Jē'şus. They brought them to Jē'şus, on the Mount of Ŏl'ĭveş, and they laid some of their own clothes on the colt for a cushion, and set Jē'şus upon it. Then all the disciples and a very great multitude threw their garments upon the ground for Jē'şus to ride upon. Others cut down branches from the trees and laid them on the ground.

And as Jē'şus rode over the mountain toward Jė-ru̩'sȧ-lĕm many walked before him waving branches of palm-trees. And they all cried together:

"Hosanna to the Son of Dā'vid! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father Dā'vid, that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

These things they said because they believed that Jē'şus was the Chrīst, the Anointed King, and they hoped that he would now set up his throne in Jė-ru̩'sȧ-lĕm. Some of the Phăr'ĭ-seeş in the crowd, who did not believe in Jē'şus, said to him, "Master, stop your disciples!"

But Jē'şus said, "I tell you, that if these should be still, the very stones would cry out!"

And when he came into Jė-ru̩'sȧ-lĕm with all this multitude, all the city was filled with wonder. They said, "Who is this?"

And the multitude answered, "This is Jē'şus, the prophet of Năz'a-rĕth in Găl'ĭ-lee!"

And Jē'şus went into the Temple, and looked around it; but he did not stay, because the hour was late. He went again to Bĕth′a-ny̆, and there stayed at night with his friends.

These things took place on Sunday, the first day of the week; and that Sunday in the year is called Palm Sunday, because of the palm-branches which the people carried before Jē′şus.

Story Thirty-one

THE LAST VISITS OF JESUS TO THE TEMPLE

Matthew xxi : 18, to xxiii : 39; Mark xi : 12, to xii : 44; Luke xix : 45, to xxi : 4.

ON Monday morning, the second day of the week, Jē′şus rose very early in the morning and, without waiting to take his breakfast, went with his disciples from Bĕth′a-ny̆ over the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş toward Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. On the mountain he saw at a distance a fig-tree covered with leaves, and although it was early for figs to be ripe, he hoped that he might find upon it some figs fit to be eaten. Among the Jewş, and by their law, any one passing a tree could eat of its fruit, even though he were not the owner; but he would not be allowed to carry any away.

But when Jē′şus came near to this tree he saw that there was no fruit upon it, neither ripe nor green, but leaves only. Then a thought came into the mind of Jē′şus; and he spoke to the tree, while his disciples heard his words, "No fruit shall grow on thee from this time forever." And then he walked on his way to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. We shall see later why Jē′şus spoke those words, and what came from them.

You remember that when Jē′ṣus came to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm the first time after he began to preach, he found the courts of the Temple filled with people buying, and selling, and changing money, and he drove them all out. But that had been three years before; and now when Jē′ṣus came into the Temple on the Monday morning before the Passover he found all the traders there once more, selling the oxen, and sheep, and doves for sacrifices and changing money at the tables.

And again Jē′ṣus rose up against these people who would make his Father's house a shop and a place of gain. He drove them all out; he turned over the tables of the money-changers, scattering their money on the floor; he cleared away the seats of those that were selling doves; and whenever he saw any one even carrying a jar, or a basket, or any load through the Temple, he stopped him, and made him go back. He said to all the people, "It is written in the prophets, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of robbers!'"

The Jewṣ had made it a rule that no blind man, nor any lame man, could go into the Temple; for they thought only those perfect in body should come before the Lord. But they forgot that God looks at hearts and not at bodies. And when Jē′ṣus found that many blind and lame people were at the doors of the Temple he allowed them to come in, and made them all well.

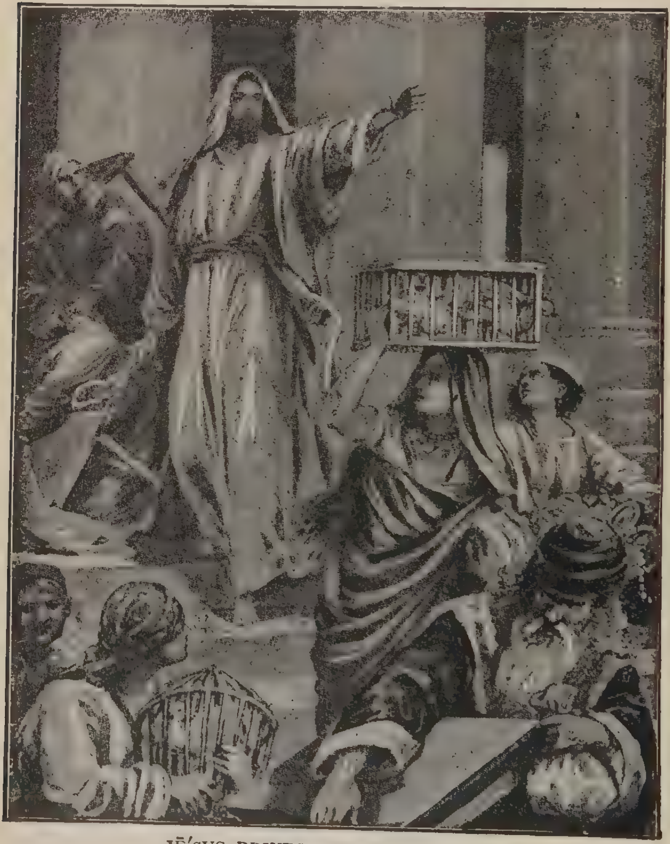
And the little children, who always loved Jē′ṣus, saw him in the Temple, and they cried out, as they heard others crying, "Hosanna to the Son of Dā′vid!"

The chief priests and scribes were greatly displeased as they heard the voices of these children, and they said to Jē′ṣus, "Do you hear what these are saying?"

And Jē′ṣus said, "Yes; and have you never read what is written in the Psalms, 'Out of the mouth of babes and little ones, thou hast made thy praise perfect'?"

And all the common people came to hear Jē′ṣus as he taught in the Temple, and they listened to him gladly, for he gave them plain and simple teachings, with many parables or stories. But th rulers and chief priests grew more and more angry as they saw the courts of the Temple filled with people eager to hear Jē′ṣus. They tried to find some way to lay hands on Jē′ṣus, and to kill him; but they dared not while all the crowds were around him.

All that day Jē'ṣus taught the people, and when night came he went out of the city, over the Mount of Ŏl'ĭveṣ, to Bĕth'a-nў, where he was safe among his friends.



JĒ'ṢUS DRIVES OUT THE TRADERS.

And on the next morning, which was Tuesday of the week before the Passover, Jē'ṣus again went over the Mount of Ŏl'ĭveṣ with his disciples. They passed the fig-tree to which Jē'ṣus had spoken such strange words on the day before. And now the disciples saw that the tree was standing, withered and dried, with its leaves dry and rustling in the wind.

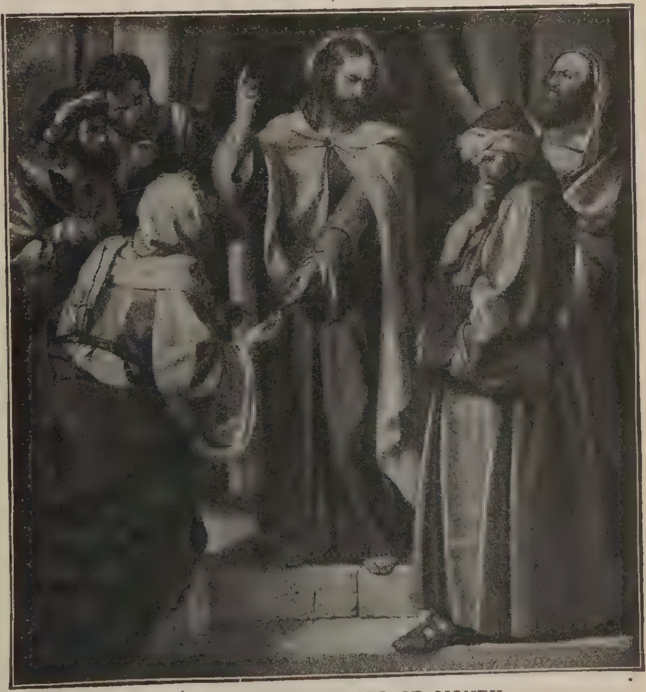
"Look, Master!" said Pē'tẽr. "The fig-tree to which you spoke yesterday is withered!"

And Jē'ṣus said to them all, "Have faith in God, for in truth I say to you, that if you have faith, you shall not only do this which has been done to the fig-tree; but also, if you shall say to this mountain, 'Be moved away and thrown into the sea!' it shall be done. And all things, whatever they may be, that you ask in prayer, if you have faith, shall be given to you." Again Jē'ṣus went into the Temple and taught the people.

And Jē'ṣus gave another parable or story, that of "The Wedding Feast." He said:

"There was a certain king who made a great feast at the wedding of his son; and he sent out his servant to call those whom he had invited to the feast. But they would not come. Then he sent forth other servants, and said, 'Tell those who were invited that my dinner is all ready; my oxen are killed, and the dishes are on the table. Say to them, "All things are ready; come to the marriage-feast!"'

"But the men who had been sent for would not come. One went to his farm, another to his shop, and some of them seized the servants whom he sent, and beat them, and treated them roughly; and some of them they killed. This made the king very angry. He sent his armies, and killed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding-feast is ready, but those that were invited were not worthy of such honor. Go out into the streets, and call in everybody that you can find, high and low, rich and poor, good and bad, and tell them that they are welcome.'



JĒ'ṢUS AND THE PIECE OF MONEY.

"The servants went out and invited all the people of every kind, and brought them to the feast, so that all the places were filled. And to all who came they gave a wedding garment, so that every one might be dressed as was fitting before the king.

"But when the king came in to meet his guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. He said to him, 'Friend, why have you come to the feast without a wedding garment?'

"The man had nothing to say; he stood as one dumb. Then the king said to his officers, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him out into the darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For in the kingdom of God many are called, but few are chosen.'"

The enemies of Jē′ṣus thought that they had found a way to bring him into trouble, either with the people, or with the Rō′manṣ, who were the rulers over the land. So they sent to him some men, who acted as though they were honest and true, but were in their hearts seeking to destroy Jē′ṣus. These men came, and they said, "Master, we know that you teach the truth, and that you are not afraid of any man. Now tell what is right, and what we should do. Ought our people, the Jewṣ, to pay taxes to the Rō′man Emperor Çæ′ṣar, or not? Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?"

And they watched for his answer. If he should say, "It is right to pay the tax," then these men could tell the people, "Jē′ṣus is the friend of the Rō′manṣ, and the enemy of the Jewṣ." And then they would turn away from him. But if he should say, "It is not right to pay the tax; refuse to pay it," then they might say to the Rō′man governor that Jē′ṣus would not obey the laws, and the governor might put him in prison or kill him. So whatever answer Jē′ṣus might give, they hoped he might make trouble for himself.

But Jē′ṣus knew their hate and the thoughts of their hearts, and he said, "Let me see a piece of the money that is given for the tax."

They brought him a silver piece, and he looked at it, and said, "Whose head is this on the coin? Whose name is written over it?"

They answered him, "That is Çæ′ṣar, the Rō′man emperor."

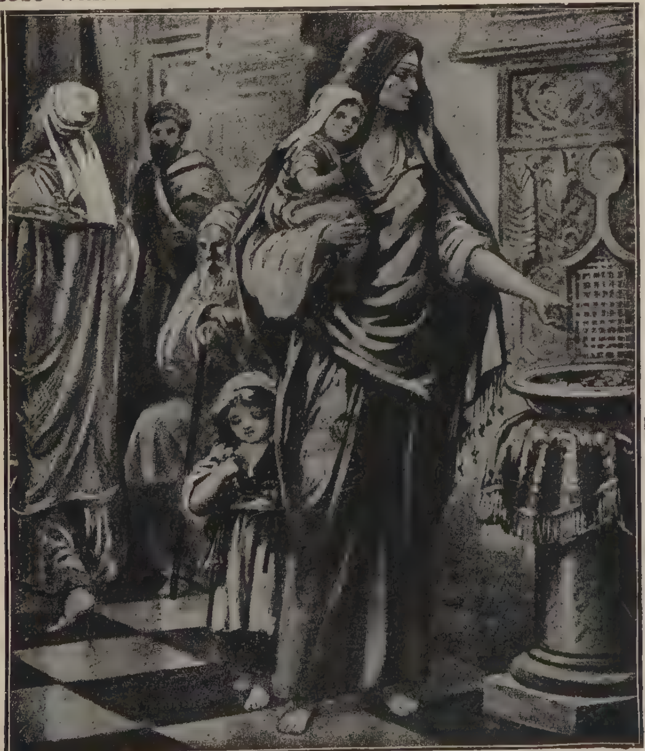
"Well, then," said Jē′ṣus, "give to Çæ′ṣar the things that are Çæ′ṣar's, and give to God the things that are God's!"

They wondered at his answer, for it was so wise that they could speak nothing against it. They tried him with other questions, but he answered them all, and left his enemies with nothing to say.

Then Jē′ṣus turned upon his enemies, and spoke to them his last words. He told them of their wickedness, and warned them that they would bring down the wrath of God upon them.

Jē′ṣus was in the part of the Temple called "The Treasury," because around the wall were boxes in which the people dropped their gifts when they came to worship. Some that were rich gave much money; but a poor widow came by and dropped in two little coins, the very smallest, the two together worth only a quarter of a cent. Jē′ṣus said, "I tell you in truth that this poor widow has dropped into the treasury more than all the rest. For the others gave out of their plenty, but she, in her need, has given all that she had."

And with these words Jē′ṣus rose up, and went out of the Temple for the last time. Never again was the voice of Jē′ṣus heard within those walls.



THE POOR WIDOW DROPS IN TWO LITTLE COINS.

Story Thirty-two

THE PARABLES ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

Matthew xxiv : 1, to xxv : 46; Mark xiii : 1 to 37; Luke xxi : 5 to 38.

AFTER Jē′şus had spoken his last words to the people and their rulers, he walked out of the Temple with his disciples. As they were passing through the great gates on the east of the Temple the disciples said to Jē′şus, "Master, what a splendid building this is! Look at these great stones in the foundation!"

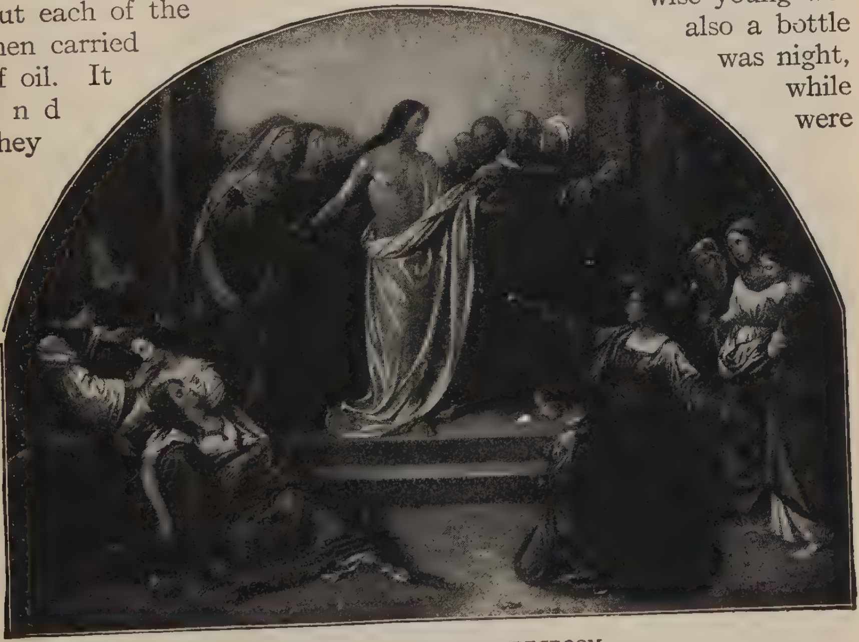
Jē′şus answered the disciples, "Do you see these great walls? The time is coming when these buildings shall be thrown down; when not one stone that you are looking upon shall be left in its place; when the very foundations of this house and this city shall be torn up!"

These words filled the followers of Jē′şus with the deepest sorrow, for they loved the Temple and the city of Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, as all Jewş loved it, and to them its fall seemed the ruin of the whole world. Yet they believed the words of their Master, for they knew that he was a prophet, whose words were sure to come to pass, and that he was more than a prophet, even the Son of God. They walked with Jē′şus down into the valley of the brook Çē′dron, and up the slopes of the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş. On the top of the mountain they looked down upon the Temple and the city; and then some of the disciples said to Jē′şus:

"Master, tell us when shall these dreadful things be? Give us some sign, that we may know when they are coming."

Then Jē′şus sat down with his disciples on the mountain and told them of many things that were to come upon the city and the world; how wars should arise, and earthquakes and diseases should break forth; how enemies were to come and fight against Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, and destroy it and scatter its people; and how trouble should arise upon all the earth. And he told them that he would some time come again, as the Lord of all; and that all who believe in him should watch, and be ready to meet him. Then he gave the parable of "The Ten Young Women." This was the story:

"There were ten young women who were going out one night with their lamps in their hands to meet a wedding party. Five of these young women were wise, and five were foolish. Those that were foolish took with them their lighted lamps, but had no more oil than that which was in their lamps; but each of the wise young women carried also a bottle of oil. It was night, and while they were waiting for the bridal party they all fell asleep. At midnight they were all awaked by the sudden cry, 'The bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him!'



THE COMING OF THE BRIDEGROOM.

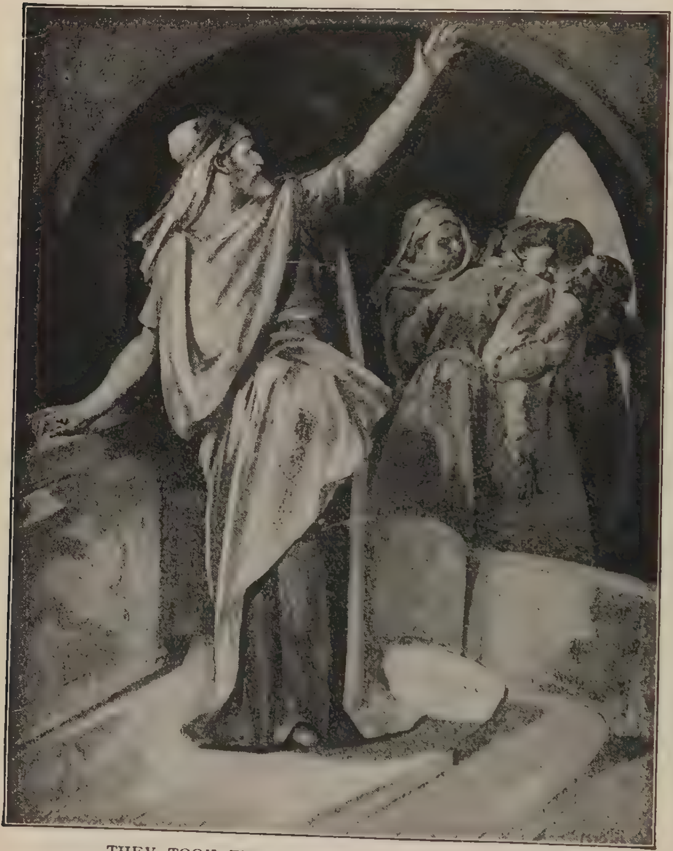
"Then all the young women rose up, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish ones said, 'Let us have some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

"But the other young women said, 'Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you too; go to those who sell, and buy oil for yourselves.'

"The young women who had no oil went away to buy; and while they were away the bridal party came; and those that were ready went in with them to the feast; and then the door was shut. And afterward the other young women came, knocking on the door, and calling out, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

"But he said, 'I do not know you.'

"And he would not open the door. Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour when your Lord will come."



THEY TOOK THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT AWAY.

Jē'şus also gave to his disciples another parable or picture of what shall come to pass at the end of the world. He said:

"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the angels of God shall come with him, then he shall sit on his glorious throne as King. And before him shall be brought together all the people of the world; and he shall divide them, and make them stand apart, just as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And he shall put his sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left. Then the King shall say to those on his right hand, 'Come, ye whom my Father has blessed; come, and take the kingdom which God has made ready for you. For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me into your home; I was naked, and you gave me clothes; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.'

"Then all those on the right of the King will say:

"'Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and feed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and gave thee clothes? And when did we see thee sick, or in prison, and come to thee?'

"And the King shall answer, and shall say to them:

"'Inasmuch as you did it to one of these my brothers, even the very least of them, you did it to me.'

"Then the King shall turn to those on his left hand, and shall say to them:

"'Go away from me, ye cursed ones, into the everlasting fire which has been made ready for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me no food; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and you did not open your doors to me; I was naked, and you gave me no clothes; I was sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.'

"Then shall they answer him:

"'Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not help thee?'

"And the King shall say to them:

"'Inasmuch as you did it not to one of these the least of my brothers, you did it not to me.'

"And the wicked shall go away to be punished forever; but the righteous unto everlasting life."

After these words, Jē'ṣus went with his disciples again to Bĕth'a-nȳ.

Story Thirty-three

THE LAST SUPPER

Matthew xxvi : 17 to 35; Mark xiv : 12 to 31; Luke xxii : 7 to 38; John xiii : 1, to xvii : 26.

ON one of the days in the week before the Passover the disciples came to Jē′şus at Bĕth′a-ny̆, and said, "Master, where shall we make ready the Passover for you to eat?"

Then Jē′şus called to himself the two disciples, Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn, and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you; follow him, and go into the house where he goes, and say to the head of the house, 'The Master says, "Where is my guest-room; where I can eat the Passover with my disciples?"'

"And he will himself show you a large upper room, furnished; there make ready for us."

Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn went into Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and soon in the street they saw a man walking toward them carrying a pitcher of water. They followed him, went into the house where he took the pitcher, and spoke to the man who seemed to be its head:

"The Master says, 'Where is the guest-room for me, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'"

The man led them upstairs, and showed them a large upper room, with the table and the couches around it, all ready for the guests at dinner. Then the disciples went out, and brought a lamb, and roasted it; and made ready the vegetables and the thin wafers of bread made without yeast, for the meal.

On Thursday afternoon, Jē′şus and his disciples walked out of Bĕth′a-ny̆ together, and over the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş, and into the city. Only Jē′şus, who could read the thoughts of men, knew that one of these disciples, Jū′das, had made a promise to the chief priests to lead them and their servants to Jē′şus, when the hour should come to seize him: and Jū′das was watching for the best time to do this dreadful deed. They came into the house, and went upstairs to the large room, where they found the supper all ready. The meal was spread upon a table; and around the table were couches for the company, where each one lay down with his head toward the table, so near that he could help himself to the food, while his feet were at the foot of the couch, toward the wall of the room. Their feet were bare, for they had all taken off their sandals as they came in.

Jē′ṣus was leaning at the head of the table, and Jŏhn, the disciple whom Jē′ṣus loved most, was lying next to him. While they were eating, Jē′ṣus took bread, and gave thanks. Then he broke it, and passed a piece to each one of the twelve, saying:

"Take, and eat; this is my body which is broken for you; do this and remember me."

Afterward, he took the cup of wine, and passed it to each one, with the words:

"This cup is my blood, shed for you, and for many, that their sins may be taken away; as often as you drink this, remember me."

While they were still leaning on the couches around the table, Jē′ṣus rose up, and took off his outer robe, and then tied around his waist a long towel. He poured water into a basin, and while all the disciples were wondering, he carried the water to the feet of one of the disciples, and began to wash them, just as though he himself were a servant. Then he washed the feet of another disciple, and then of still another. When he came to Sī′mon Pē′tēr, Pē′tēr said to him, "Dost thou, O Lord, wash my feet?"

Jē′ṣus said to him, "What I do, you cannot understand now, but you will understand it after a time."

"Lord, thou shalt never wash my feet," said Pē′tēr.

"If I do not wash you," said Jē′ṣus, "then you are none of mine."

Then Pē′tēr said, "O Lord, wash not only my feet, but my hands and my head too!"

But Jē′ṣus said to him, "No, Pē′tēr; one who has already bathed needs only to wash his feet, and then he is clean. And you are clean, but not all of you."

For he knew that among those whose feet he was washing was one, the traitor, who would soon give him up to his enemies. After he had washed their feet, he put on his garments again, and leaned once more on his couch, and looked around, and said:

"Do you know what I have done to you? You call me 'Master' and 'Lord,' and you speak rightly, for so I am. If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash each other's feet; for I have given you an example that you should do to each other as I have done to you."

By this Jē′şus meant that all who follow him should help and serve each other, instead of seeking great things for themselves.

While Jē′şus was talking, he became very sad and sorrowful, and said, "Verily, verily, I say to you, that one of you that are eating with me shall betray me, and give me up to those who will kill me."

Then all the disciples looked round on each other, wondering who was the one that Jē′şus meant. One said, and another said, "Am I the one, Lord?"

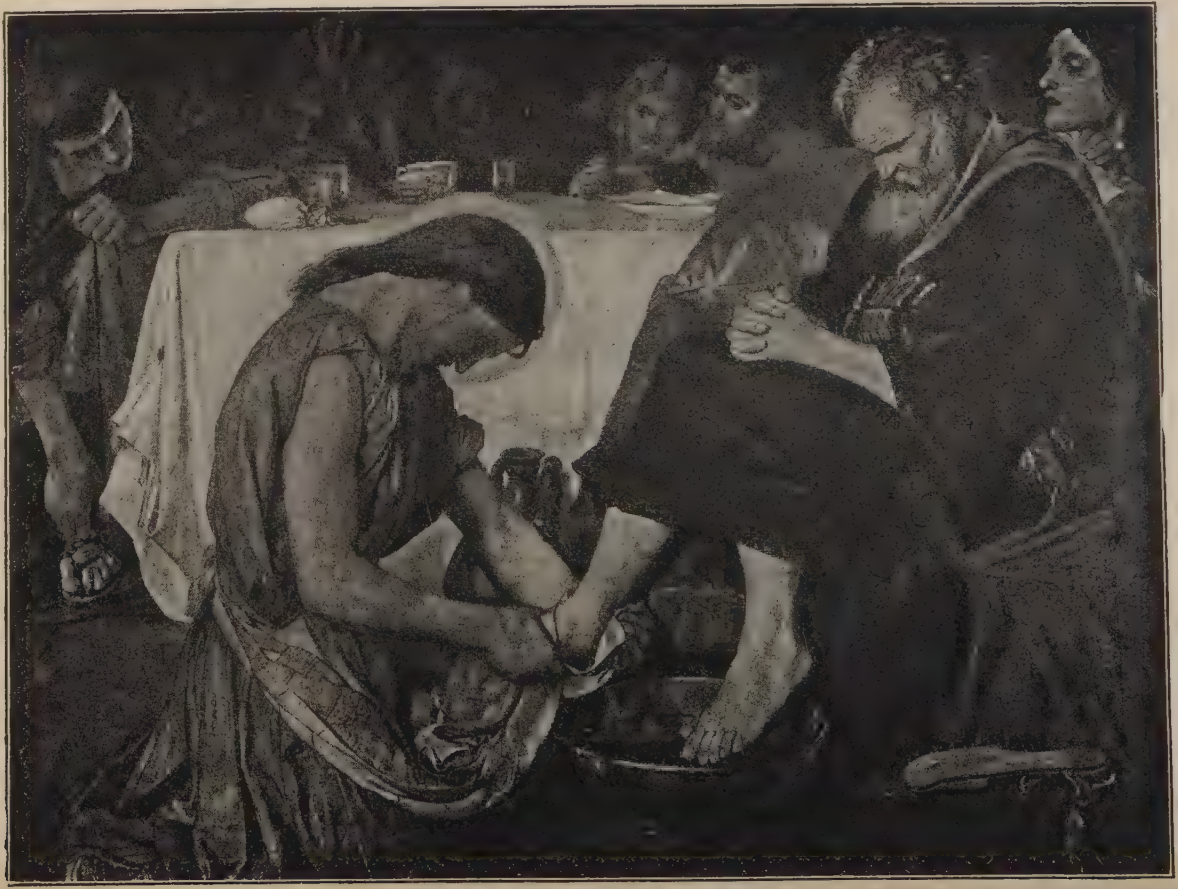
And Jē′şus said, "It is one of you twelve men, who are dipping your hands into the same dish and eating with me. The Son of Man goes, as it is written of him; but woe to that man who betrays him and gives him up to die. It would have been good for that man if he had never been born."

While Jē′şus was speaking, Sī′mon Pē′tẽr made signs to Jŏhn across the table, that he, leaning next to Jē′şus, should ask him who this traitor was. So Jŏhn whispered to Jē′şus, as he was lying close to him, "Lord, who is it?"

Jē′şus answered, but so low that none else heard: "It is the one to whom I will give a piece of bread after I have dipped it in the dish."

Then Jē′şus dipped into the dish a piece of bread, and gave it to Jū′das Ĭs-căr′ĭ-ot, who was lying near him. And as he gave it, he said, "Do quickly what you are going to do."

No one except Jŏhn knew what this meant. Not all heard what Jē′şus said to Jū′das; and those who heard thought that Jē′şus was telling him to do something belonging to the feast, or perhaps, as Jū′das carried the money, that he should make some gift to the poor. But Jū′das at once went out, for he saw now that his plan was known, and it must be carried out now or never. He knew that after the supper Jē′şus would go back to Bĕth′a-nȳ, and he went to the rulers, told them where they might watch for Jē′şus on his way back to Bĕth′a-nȳ, and went with a band of men to a place at the foot of the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş, where he was sure Jē′şus would pass.



JĒ'ṢUS WASHES THE FEET OF PĒ'TĒR.

As soon as Jū′das had gone out, Jē′ṣus said to the eleven disciples, "Little children, I shall be with you only a little while. I am going away; and where I go, you cannot come now. But when I am gone away from you, remember this new commandment that I give you, that you love one another even as I have loved you."

Sī′mon Pē′tẽr said to Jē′ṣus, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jē′ṣus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow me now, but you shall follow me afterward."

Pē′tẽr said to him, "Lord, what, cannot I follow you even now? I will lay down my life for your sake."

Jē′ṣus said, "Will you lay down your life for me? I tell you, Pē′tẽr, that before the cock crows to-morrow morning you will three times deny that you have ever known me!"

But Pē′tẽr said, "Though I die, I will never deny you, Lord!"

And so said all the other disciples; but Jē′ṣus said to them, "Before morning comes every one of you will leave me alone. Yet I will not be alone, for the Father will be with me."

Jē′ṣus saw that Pē′tẽr and all his disciples were full of sorrow at his words, and he said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many houses; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I am going to make ready a place for you. And when it is ready, I will come again, and take you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

Then Jē′ṣus talked with the disciples a long time, and prayed for them. And about midnight they left the supper-room together, and came to the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveṣ.

Story Thirty-four

THE OLIVE ORCHARD AND THE HIGH-PRIEST'S HALL

Matthew xxvi : 36 to 75; Mark xiv : 32 to 72; Luke xxii : 40 to 62; John xviii : 1 to 27.

AT the foot of the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveş, near the path over the hill toward Bĕth′a-ny̆, there was an orchard of olive trees, called "The Garden of Ḡĕth-sĕm′a-nė." The word "Ḡĕth-sĕm′a-nė" means "oil press." Jē′şus often went to this place with his disciples, because of its quiet shade. At this garden he stopped, and outside he left eight of his disciples, saying to them, "Sit here, while I go inside and pray."

He took with him the three chosen ones, Pē′tẽr, Jāmeş and Jŏhn, and went within the orchard. Jē′şus knew that in a little while Jū′das would be there with a band of men to seize him; that within a few hours he would be beaten, and stripped, and led out to die. The thought of what he was to suffer came upon him and filled his soul with grief. He said to Pē′tẽr, and Jāmeş, and Jŏhn:

"My soul is filled with sorrow; a sorrow that almost kills me. Stay here and watch while I am praying."

He went a little further among the trees, and flung himself down upon the ground, and cried out:

"O, my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou willest!"

So earnest was his feeling and so great his suffering, that there came out upon his face great drops of sweat like blood, falling upon the ground. After praying for a time, he rose up from the earth, and went to his three disciples, and found them all asleep. He awaked them, and said to Pē′tẽr:

"What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that you may not go into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He left them, and went a second time into the woods, and fell on his knees, and prayed again, saying:

"O, my Father, if this cup cannot pass away, and I must drink it, then thy will be done."

He came again to the three disciples, and found them sleeping; but this time he did not wake them. He went once more into the woods, and prayed, using the same words. And an angel from heaven came to him, and gave him strength.

He was now ready for the fate that was soon to come, and his heart was strong. Once more he went to the three disciples, and said to them:

"You may as well sleep on now, and take your rest, for the hour is at hand; and already the Son of man is given by the traitor into the hands of sinners. But rise up, and let us be going. See, the traitor is here!"

The disciples awoke; they heard the noise of a crowd, and saw the flashing of torches and the gleaming of swords and spears. In the throng they saw Jū′das standing, and they knew now that he was the traitor of whom Jē′şus had spoken the night before. Jū′das came rushing forward, and kissed Jē′şus, as though he were glad to see him. This was a signal that he had given beforehand to the band; for the men of the guard did not know Jē′şus, and Jū′das had said to them, "The one that I shall kiss is the man that you are to take; seize him and hold him fast."

Jē′şus said to Jū′das, "Jū′das, do you betray the Son of man with a kiss?"

Then he turned to the crowd, and said, "Whom do you seek?"

They answered, "Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth."

Jē′şus said, "I am he."

When Jē′şus said this, a sudden fear came upon his enemies; they drew back, and fell upon the ground.

After a moment, Jē′şus said again, "Whom do you seek?"

And again they answered, "Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth."

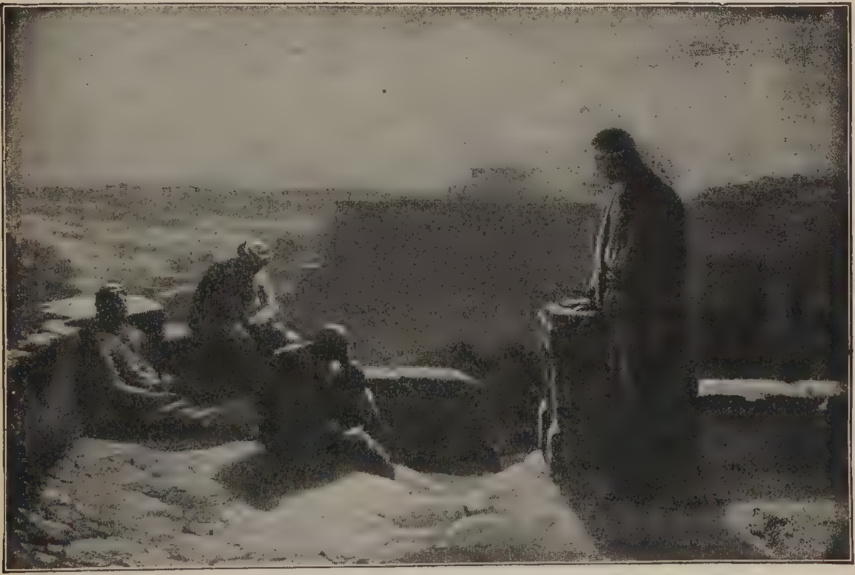
And Jē′şus said, pointing to his disciples, "I told you that I am he. If you are seeking me, let these disciples go their own way."

But as they came forward to seize Jē′şus, Pē′tẽr drew his sword, and struck at one of the men in front, and cut off his right ear.

The man was a servant of the high-priest, and his name was Măl′chus.

Jē′ṣus said to Pē′tẽr, "Put up the sword into its sheath; the cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it? Do you not know that I could call upon my Father, and he would send to me armies upon armies of angels?"

Then he spoke to the crowd: "Let me do this." And he touched the place where the ear had been cut off, and it came on again and was well. Jē′ṣus said to the rulers and leaders of the armed men, "Do you come out against me with swords and clubs as though I were a robber? I was with you every day in the Temple, and you did not lift your hands against me. But the words in the Scriptures must come to pass; and this is your hour."



JĒ′ṢUS FINDS HIS DISCIPLES ASLEEP.

When the disciples of Jē′ṣus saw that he would not allow them to fight for him, they did not know what to do. In their sudden alarm they all ran away, and left their Master alone with his enemies. These men laid their hands on Jē′ṣus, and bound him, and led him away to the house of the high-priest. There were at that time two men called high-priests by the Jewṣ. One was Ăn′nas, who had been high-priest until his office had been taken from him by the Rō'manş, and give to Cā'ia-phăs, his son-in-law. But Ăn'nas still had great power among the people; and they brought Jē'şus, all bound as he was, first before Ăn'nas.

Sī'mon Pē'tēr and Jŏhn, the disciple whom Jē'şus loved, had followed after the crowd of those who carried Jē'şus away, and they came to the door of the high-priest's house. Jŏhn knew the high-priest and went in, but Pē'tēr at first stayed outside, until Jŏhn went out and brought him in. He came in, but did not dare to go into the room where Jē'şus stood before the high-priest Ăn'nas. In the courtyard of the house they had made a fire of characol, and Pē'tēr stood among those who were warming themselves at the fire.

Ăn'nas, in the inner room, asked Jē'şus about his disciples and teaching. Jē'şus answered him, "What I have taught has been open in the synagogues and in the Temple. Why do you ask me? Ask those that heard me; they know what I said."

Then one of the officers struck Jē'şus on the mouth, saying to him, "Is this the way that you answer the high-priest?"

Jē'şus answered the officer calmly and quietly, "If I have said anything evil, tell what the evil is; but if I have spoken the truth, why do you strike me?"

While Ăn'nas and his men were thus showing their hate toward Jē'şus, who stood bound and alone among his enemies, Pē'tēr was still in the courtyard, warming himself at the fire. A woman, who was a serving-maid in the house, looked at Pē'tēr sharply, and finally said to him, "You were one of those men with this Jē'şus of Năz'a-rĕth!"

Pē'tēr was afraid to tell the truth, and he answered her, "Woman, I do not know the man, and I do not know what you are talking about."

And to get away from her he went out into the porch of the house. There another woman-servant saw him, and said, "This man was one of those with Jē'şus!"

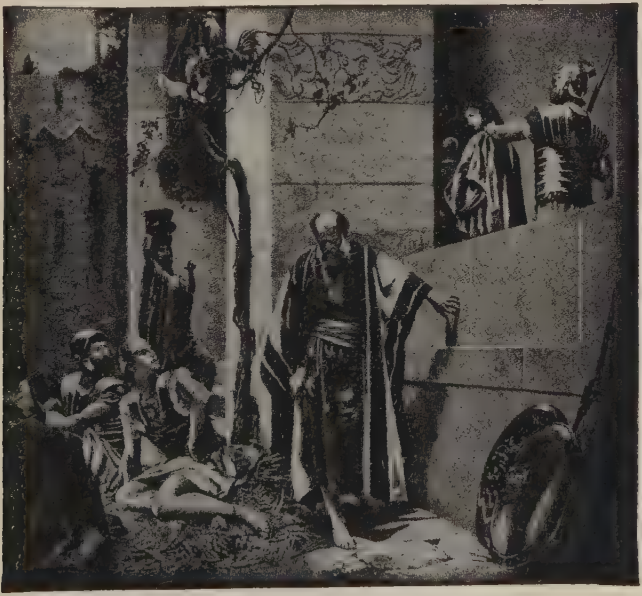
And Pē'tēr swore with an oath that he did not know Jē'şus at all. Soon a man came by, who was of kin to Măl'chus, whose ear Pē'tēr had cut off. He looked at Pē'tēr, and heard him speak, and said, "You are surely one of this man's disciples, for your speech shows that you came from Găl'ĭ-lee."

Then Pē'tēr began again to curse and to swear, declaring that he did not know the man of whom they were speaking.

Just at that moment the loud, shrill crowing of a cock startled Pē′tĕr, and at the same time he saw Jē′ṣus, who was being dragged through the hall from Ăn′nas to the council-room of Cā′ia-phăs, the other high-priest. And the Lord turned as he was passing and looked at Pē′tĕr.

Then there flashed into Pē′tĕr's mind what Jē′ṣus had said on the evening before, "Before the cock crows to-morrow morning, you will three times deny that you have ever known me."

Then Pē′tĕr went out of the high-priest's house into the street, and he wept bitterly because he had denied his Lord.



PĒ′TĔR WENT OUT AND WEPT BITTERLY.

Story Thirty-five

THE CROWN OF THORNS

Matthew xxvi : 57, to xxvii : 26; Mark xv : 1 to 15; Luke xxii : 66, to xxiii : 25; John xviii : 19, to xix : 16.

FROM the house of Ăn′nas the enemies of Jē′şus led him away bound to the house of Cā′ia-phăs, whom the Rō′manş had lately made high-priest. There all the rulers of the Jewş were called together, and they tried to find men who would swear that they had heard Jē′şus say some wicked thing. This would give the rulers an excuse for putting Jē′şus to death. But they could find nothing. Some men swore one thing, and some swore another; but their words did not agree.

Finally the high-priest stood up, and said to Jē′şus, who stood bound in the middle of the hall, "Have you nothing to say? What is it that these men are speaking against you?"

But Jē′şus stood silent, answering nothing. Then the high-priest spoke again, "Are you the Chrīst, the Son of God?"

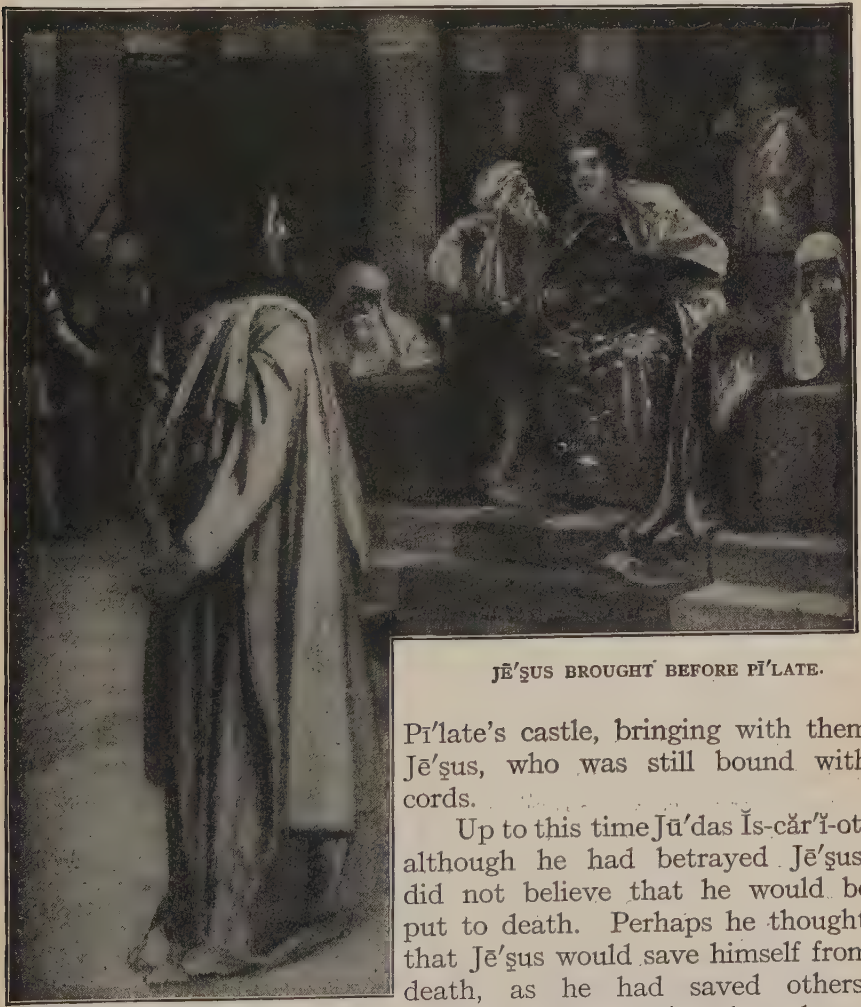
And Jē′şus said, "I am; and the time shall come when you will see the Son of man sitting on the throne of power and coming in the clouds of heaven!"

These words made the high-priest very angry. He said to the rulers, "Do you hear these dreadful words? He says that he is the Son of God. What do you think of words like these?"

They all said, with one voice, "He deserves to be put to death!"

Then the servants of the high-priest and the soldiers that held Jē′şus began to mock him. They spat on him, and they covered his face, and struck him with their hands, and said, "If you are a prophet, tell who it is that is striking you!"

The rulers of the Jewş and the priests and the scribes passed a vote that Jē′şus should be put to death. But the land of the Jewş was then ruled by the Rō′manş, and no man could be put to death unless the Rō′man governor commanded it. The Rō′man governor at that time was a man named Pŏn′tĭ-us Pī′late, and he was then in the city. So all the rulers and a great crowd of people came to Pī′late's castle, bringing with them Jē′şus, who was still bound with cords.



JĒ′ŞUS BROUGHT BEFORE PĪ′LATE.

Up to this time Jū′das Ĭs-căr′ĭ-ot, although he had betrayed Jē′şus, did not believe that he would be put to death. Perhaps he thought that Jē′şus would save himself from death, as he had saved others, by some wonderful work. But when he saw Jē′şus bound and beaten, and doing nothing to protect himself, and when he heard the rulers vote that Jē′şus should be put to death, Jū′das knew how wicked was the deed that he had wrought. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver that had been given to him as the reward for betraying his Lord, and he said, "I have sinned in betraying one who has done no wrong!"

But they answered him, "What is that to us? You look after that!"

When Jū′das saw that they would not take back the money and let Jē′ṣus go free, he carried the thirty pieces to the Temple, and threw them down on the floor. Then he went away and hanged himself. And thus the traitor died.

After that the rulers scarcely knew what to do with the money. They said, "We cannot put it into the treasury of the Temple, because it is the price paid for a man's blood."

And when they had talked together, they used it in buying a piece of ground called "the potter's field." This they set apart as a place for burying strangers who died in the city and had no friends. But every one in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm spoke of that place as "The Field of Blood."

It was very early in the morning when the rulers of the Jewṣ brought Jē′ṣus to Pī′late. They would not go into Pī′late's hall, because Pī′late was not of their nation; and Pī′late came out to them, and asked them, "What charge do you bring against this man?"

They answered, "If he were not an evil doer, we would not have brought him to you."

Pī′late did not wish to be troubled, and he said, "Take him away, and judge him by your own law!"

The Jewṣ said to Pī′late, "We are not allowed to put any man to death, and we have brought him to you. We have found this man teaching evil, and telling men not to pay taxes to the Emperor Çæ′ṣar, and saying that he himself is Chrīst, a king."

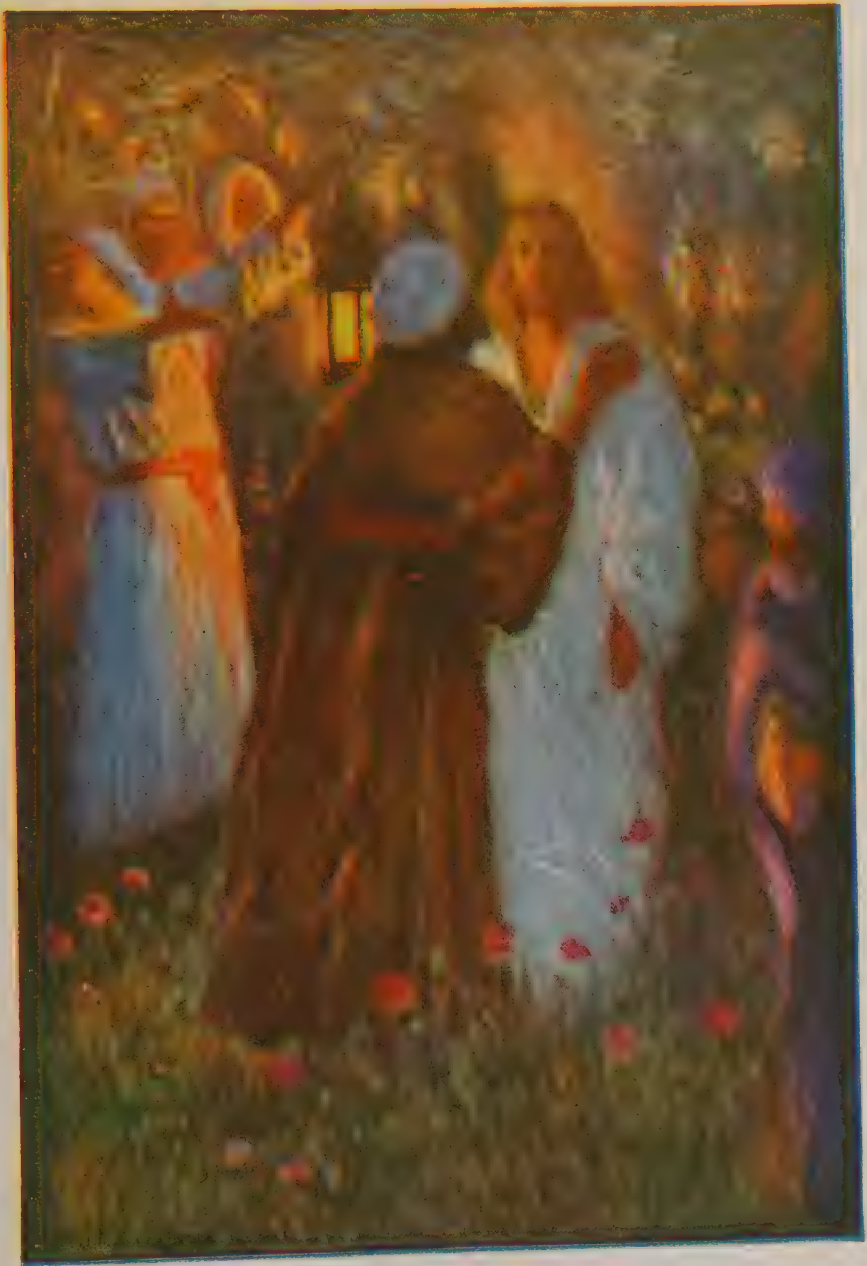
Then Pī′late went into his court-room, and sent for Jē′ṣus; and when he looked at Jē′ṣus, he said, "Are you the King of the Jewṣ? Your own people have brought you to me. What have you done?"

Jē′ṣus said to him, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, then those who serve me would fight to save me from my enemies. But now my kingdom is not here."

Pī′late said, "Are you a king, then?"

Jē′ṣus answered him, "You have spoken it. I am a king. For this was I born, and for this I came into the world, that I might speak the truth of God to men."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

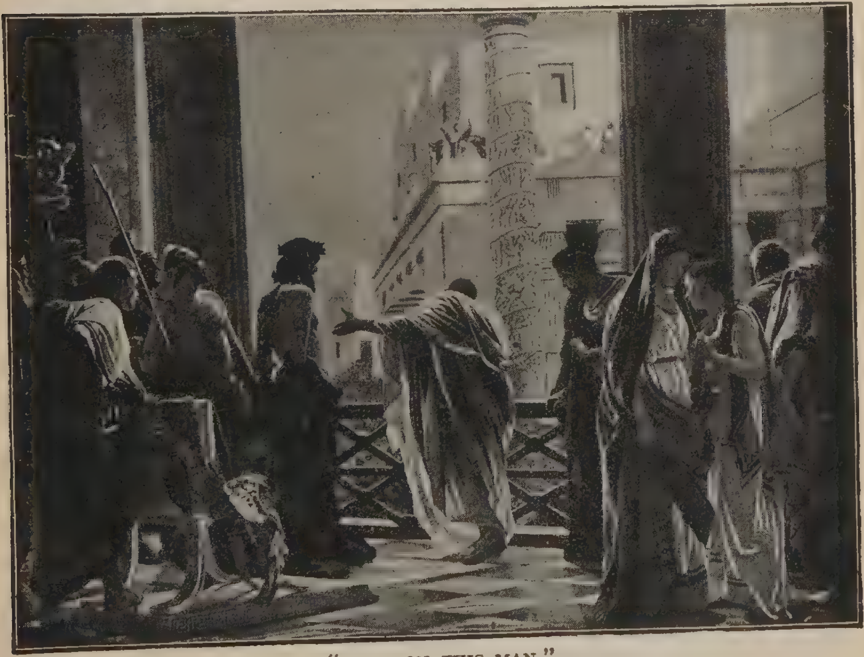


JUDAS KISSES JESUS IN THE GARDEN

"Truth," said Pī'late, "What is truth?"

Then, without waiting for an answer, Pī'late went out to the rulers and the crowd, and said, "I find no evil in this man."

Pī'late thought that Jē'ṣus was a harmless man, but perhaps one whose mind was weak, and he could see no reason why the rulers and the people should be so bitter against him. But they cried out all the more, saying, "He stirs up the people everywhere, from Găl'ĭ-lee even to this place."



"LOOK ON THIS MAN."

When Pī'late heard the word "Găl'ĭ-lee," he asked if this man had come from that land. They told him that he had; and then Pī'late said, "Găl'ĭ-lee and its people are under the rule of Hĕr'od. He has come up to Jé-ru̥'sâ-lĕm, and I will send this man to him."

So, from Pī'late's court-room, Jē'ṣus was sent, still bound, to Hĕr'od's palace. This was the Hĕr'od who had put Jŏhn the Băp'tĭst in prison, and had given his head to a dancing-girl, as we read in Story Eighteen of this Part. Hĕr'od was very glad to see Jē'ṣus, for he had heard many things about him; and he hoped to see him do some wonderful thing. But Jē′ṣus would not work wonders as a show, to be looked at; and when Hĕr′od asked him many questions, Jē′ṣus would not speak a word. Hĕr′od would not judge Jē′ṣus, for he knew that Jē′ṣus had done nothing wrong; so he and his soldiers mocked Jē′ṣus, and dressed him in a gay robe, as though he were a make-believe king, and sent him back to Pī′late.

So Pī′late, much against his will, was compelled to decide either for Jē′ṣus or against him. And just as Jē′ṣus was standing bound before him a message came to Pī′late from his wife, saying, "Do nothing against that good man; for in this night I have suffered many things in a dream on account of him."

Pī′late said to the Jewṣ, "You have brought this man to me as one who is leading the people to evil; and I have seen that there is no evil in him, nor has Hĕr′od; now I will order that he be beaten with rods, and then set free. For you know that it is the custom to set a prisoner free at the time of the feast."

They set some prisoner free, as a sign of the joy at the feast. And at that time there was in the prison a man named Bȧ-răb′bas, who was a robber and a murderer. Pī′late said to the people, "Shall I set free Jē′ṣus, who is called the King of the Jewṣ?"

But the rulers went among the people and urged them to ask for Bȧ-răb′bas to be set free.

And the crowd cried out, "Not this man, but Bȧ-răb′bas!"

Then Pī′late said, "What, then, shall I do with Jē′ṣus?"

And they all cried out, "Crucify him! Let him die on the cross!"

Pī′late wished greatly to spare the life of Jē′ṣus. To show how he felt, he sent for water, and he washed his hands before all the people, saying, "My hands are clean from the blood of this good man!"

And they cried out, "Let his blood be on us, and on our children after us! Crucify him! Send him to the cross!"

Then Pī′late, to please the people, gave them what they asked. He set free Bȧ-răb′bas, the man of their choice, though he was a robber and a murderer; but before giving way to the cry that he should send Jē′ṣus to the cross, he tried once more to save his life. He caused Jē′ṣus to be beaten until the blood came upon him, hoping that this might satisfy the people. As Jē′ṣus was spoken of as a

JŪ'DAS RETURNS THE SILVER TO THE PRIESTS.

king, the soldiers who beat Jē′şus made a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, such as was worn by kings, and bowing down before him they called out to him. "Hail, King of the Jewş!"

Then, hoping to awaken some pity for Jē′şus, Pī′late brought him out to the people, with the crown of thorns and the purple robe upon him, and Pī′late said, "Look on this man!"

But again the cry arose, "Crucify him! Send him to the cross!"

And at last Pī′late yielded to the voice of the people. He sat down on the judgment-seat, and gave commands that Jē′şus, whom he knew to be a good man, one who had done nothing evil, should be put to death upon the cross.

Story Thirty-six

THE DARKEST DAY OF ALL THE WORLD

Matthew xxvii : 31 to 66; Mark xv : 20 to 47; Luke xxiii : 26 to 56; John xix : 16 to 42.

AND so Pŏn′tĭ-us Pī′late, the Rō′man governor, gave order that Jē′şus should die by the cross. The Rō′man soldiers then took Jē′şus and beat him again most cruelly; and then led him out of the city to the place of death. This was a place called "Gŏl′gȯ-thȧ" in the Jew-ĭsh language, "Căl′va-ry̆" in that of the Rō′manş; both words meaning "The Skull Place."

With the soldiers went out of the city a great crowd of people, some of them enemies of Jē′şus, glad to see him suffer; others of them friends of Jē′şus, and the women who had helped him, now weeping as they saw him, all covered with his blood, and going out to die. But Jē′ṣus turned to them, and said:

"Daughters of Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For the days are coming when they shall count those happy who have no little ones to be slain; when they shall wish that the mountains might fall on them, and the hills might cover them, and hide them from their enemies!"

They had tried to make Jē′ṣus bear his own cross, but soon found that he was too weak from his sufferings, and could not carry it. They seized on a man who was coming out of the country into the city, a man named Sī′mon; and they made him carry the cross to its place at Căl′va-rȳ̆.

It was a custom among the Jewṣ, to give to men about to die by the cross some medicine to deaden their feelings, so that they would not suffer so greatly. They offered this to Jē′ṣus, but when he had tasted it, and found what it was, he would not take it. He knew that he would die, but he wished to have his mind clear, and to understand what was done and what was said, even though his sufferings might be greater.

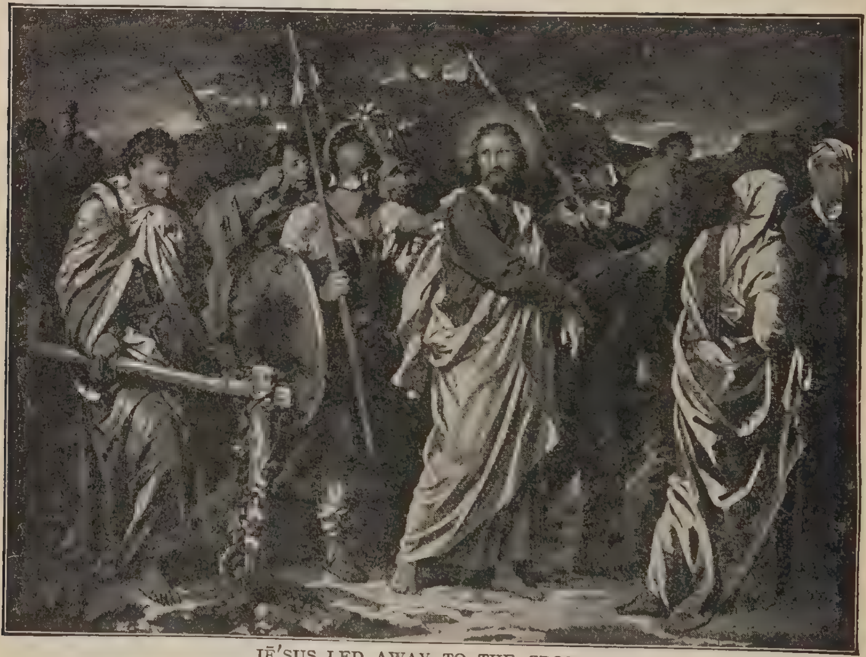
At the place Căl′va-rȳ̆ they laid the cross down, and stretched Jē′ṣus upon it, and drove nails through his hands and feet to fasten him to the cross; and then they stood it upright with Jē′ṣus upon it. While the soldiers were doing this dreadful work, Jē′ṣus prayed for them to God, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they are doing."

The soldiers also took the clothes that Jē′ṣus had worn, giving to each one a garment. But when they came to his undergarment, they found that it was woven, and had no seams; so they said, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to see who shall have it." So at the foot of the cross the soldiers threw lots for the garment of Chrīst. Two men who had been robbers and had been sentenced to die by the cross, were led out to die at the same time with Jē′ṣus. One was placed on a cross at his right side, and the other at his left; and to make Jē′ṣus appear as the worst, his cross stood in the middle. Over the head of Jē′ṣus on his cross, they placed, by Pī′late's order, a sign on which was written:

"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH,
THE KING OF THE JEWS."

This was written in three languages: in Hē′brew, which was the language of the Jewş; in Lăt-in, the language of the Rō′manş, and in Greek. Many of the people read this writing; but the chief priests were not pleased with it. They urged Pī′late to have it changed from "The King of the Jewş" to "He said, I am King of the Jewş."

But Pī′late would not change it. He said, "What I have written, I have written."



JĒ′ŞUS LED AWAY TO THE CROSS.

And the people who passed by on the road, as they looked at Jē′şus on the cross, mocked at him. Some called out to him, "You that would destroy the Temple, and build it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!"

And the priests and scribes said, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself. Come down from the cross, and we will believe in you!"

And one of the robbers who was on his own cross beside that of Jē′ṣus joined in the cry, and said, "If you are the Chrīst, save yourself and save us!"

But the other robber said to him, "Have you no fear of God, to speak thus, while you are suffering the same fate with this man? And we deserve to die, but this man has done nothing wrong."

Then this man said to Jē′ṣus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!"

And Jē′ṣus answered him, as they were both hanging on their crosses:

"To-day you shall be with me in heaven."

Before the cross of Jē′ṣus his mother was standing, filled with sorrow for her son, and beside her was one of his disciples, Jŏhn, the disciple whom he loved best. Other women besides his mother were there, his mother's sister, Mā′rȳ the wife of Clē′o-phăs, and a woman named Mā′rȳ Măg-da-lē′nē, out of whom a year before Jē′ṣus had sent an evil spirit. Jē′ṣus wished to give his mother, now that he was leaving her, into the care of Jŏhn, and he said to her, as he looked from her to Jŏhn, "Woman, see your son."

And then to Jŏhn he said, "Son, see your mother."

And on that day Jŏhn took the mother of Jē′ṣus home to his own house, and cared for her as his own mother.

At about noon a sudden darkness came over the land, and lasted for three hours. And in the middle of the afternoon, when Jē′ṣus had been on the cross six hours of terrible pain, he cried out aloud words which meant:

"My Lord, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" words which are the beginning of the twenty-second Psälm, a psalm which long before had spoken of many of Chrīst's sufferings.

After this he spoke again, saying, "I thirst!"

And some one dipped a sponge in a cup of vinegar, and put it upon a reed, and gave him a drink of it. Then Jē′ṣus spoke his last words upon the cross:

"It is finished! Father, into thy hands I give my spirit!"

And then Jē′ṣus died. And at that moment the vail in the Temple between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was torn apart by unseen hands from the top to the bottom. And the Rō′man officer who had charge of the soldiers around the cross saw what had taken place, and how Jē′ṣus died, and he said, "Truly this was a righteous man; he was the Son of God."

After Jē′ṣus was dead, one of the soldiers, to be sure that he was no longer living, ran his spear into the side of his dead body; and out of the wound came pouring both water and blood.

There were even among the rulers of the Jewṣ a few who were friends of Jē′ṣus, though they did not dare to follow Jē′ṣus openly. One of these was Nĭc-o-dē′mus, the ruler who came to see Jē′ṣus at night. Another was a rich man who came from the town of Ăr-ĭ-mă-thæ′ȧ, and was named Jō′ṣeph. Jō′ṣeph of Ăr-ĭ-mă-thæ′ȧ went boldly in to Pī′late, and asked that the body of Jē′ṣus might be given to him. Pī′late wondered that he had died so soon, for often men lived on the cross two or three days. But when he found that Jē′ṣus was really dead, he gave his body to Jō′ṣeph.

Then Jō′ṣeph and his friends took down the body of Jē′ṣus from the cross, and wrapped it in fine linen. And Nĭc-o-dē′mus brought some precious spices, myrrh and aloes, which they wrapped up with the body. Then they placed the body in Jō′ṣeph's own new tomb, which was a cave dug out of the rock, in a garden near the place of the cross. And before the opening of the cave they rolled a great stone.

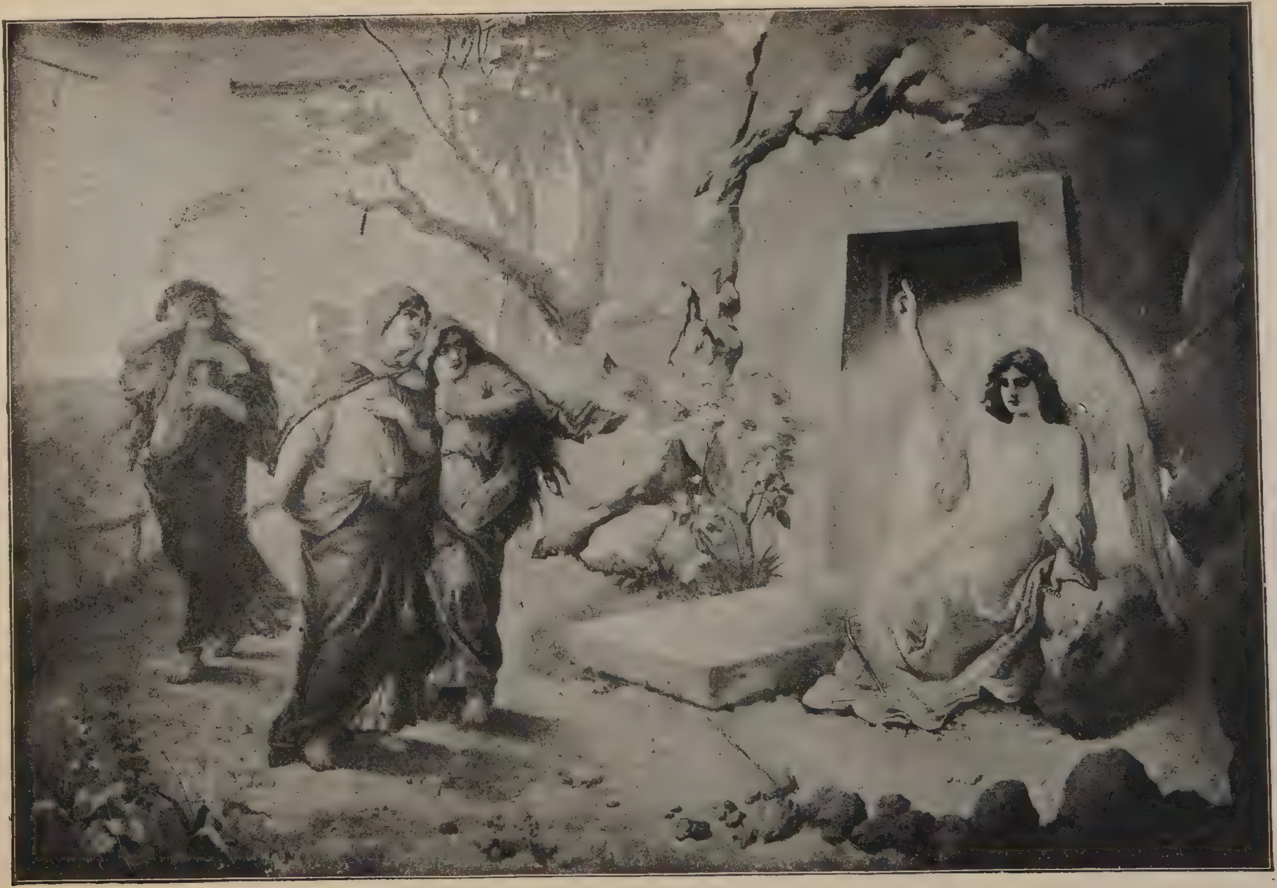
And Mā′rȳ Măg-da-lē′nė and the other Mā′rȳ and some other women saw the tomb, and watched while they laid the body of Jē′ṣus in it. On the next morning, some of the rulers of the Jewṣ came to Pī′late, and said:

"Sir, we remember that that man Jē′ṣus of Năz′a-rĕth, who deceived the people, said while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Give orders that the tomb shall be watched and made sure for three days; or else his disciples may steal his body, and then say, 'He is risen from the dead': and thus even after his death he may do more harm than he did while he was alive."

Pī′late said to them, "Set a watch, and make it as sure as you can."

Then they placed a seal upon the stone, so that no one might break it; and they set a watch of soldiers at the door.

And in the tomb the body of Jē′ṣus lay from the evening of Friday, the day when he died on the cross, to the dawn of Sunday, the first day of the week.



THE WOMEN SEE THE ANGEL AT THE TOMB OF JĒ′ŞUS.

Story Thirty-seven

THE BRIGHTEST DAY OF ALL THE WORLD

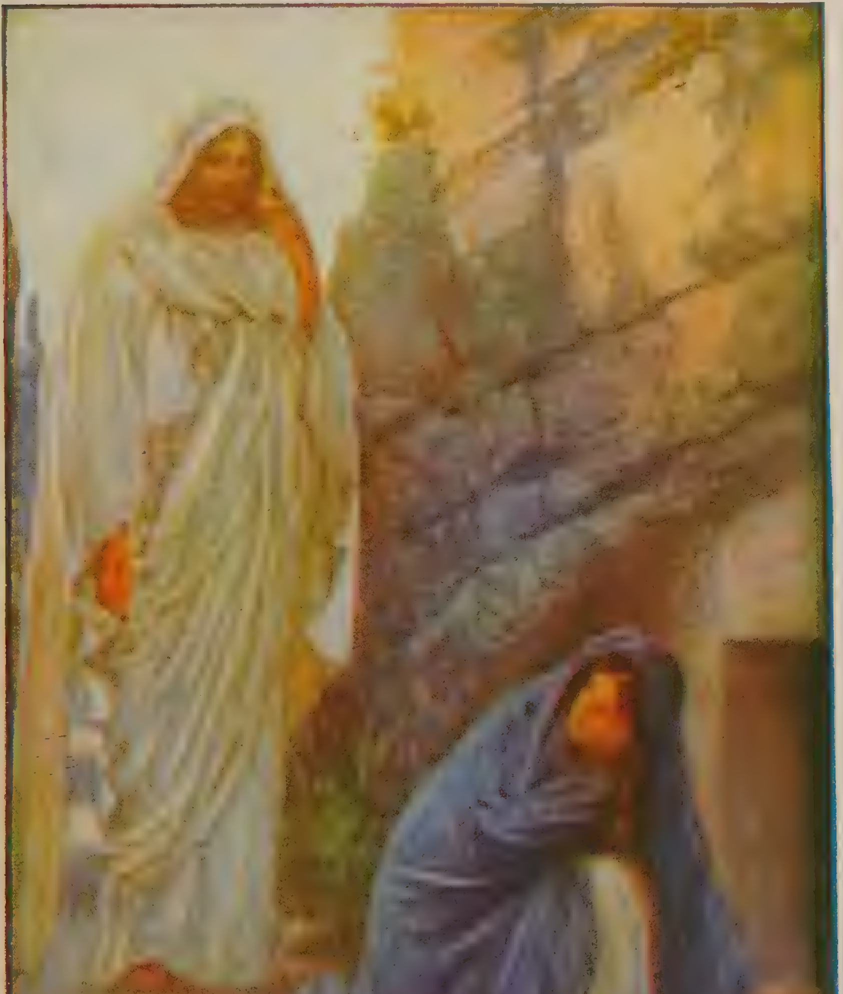
Matthew xxviii : 1 to 10; Mark xvi : 1 to 13; Luke xxiv : 1 to 49; John xx : 1 to 23.

ON Sunday morning, two days after the death and burial of Jē′ṣus, some women went very early, as soon as it was light, to the tomb in the garden. One of these women was Mā′rў̆ Măg-da-lē′nė, another was also named Mā′rў̆, and another was named Sȧ-lō′mė. They were bringing some more fragrant gums and spices to place in the wrappings upon the body of Jē′ṣus. And as they went they said to each other, "Who will roll away for us the great stone at the door of the cave?"

But when they came to the cave, they saw that the seal was broken, the stone was rolled away, and the soldiers who had been on guard were gone. There stood the tomb of Jē′ṣus all open! They did not know that before they came to the tomb, there had been an earthquake; and that an angel had come down from heaven and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. When the soldiers on guard saw the angel, with his flashing face, and his dazzling garments, they fell to the ground as though they were dead, and as soon as they could rise up, they fled away from the spot in terror; so when the women came there was no man in sight.

As soon as Mā′rў̆ Măg-da-lē′nė saw that the tomb was open, without stopping to look into it, she ran quickly to tell the disciples. A moment after she had gone, the other women looked into the tomb, and they saw that the body of Jē′ṣus was not there. But they saw sitting at each end of the tomb a young man, clothed in a long white garment. Their faces shone like angels, and when the women saw them they were filled with fear. One of the angels said to them:

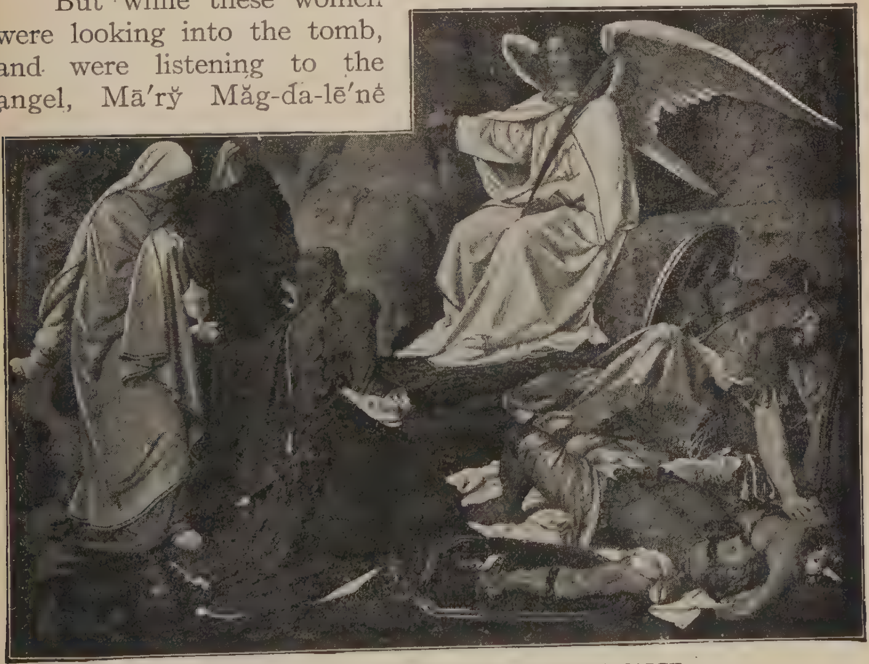
STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



MARY MAGDALENE MEETING THE RISEN JESUS

"Do not be afraid; you are looking for Jē'şus of Năz'a-rĕth, who was crucified. He is not here; he is risen, as he said that he would rise from the dead. Come, see the place where the Lord lay; and then go and tell his disciples, and tell Pē'tẽr too, that Jē'şus will go before you into Găl'ĭ-lee, and you shall see him there."

Then the women went away in mingled joy and fear. They ran in haste to bring this word of the angel to the disciples.



THE GUARDS OF THE TOMB FALL TO THE EARTH.

But while these women were looking into the tomb, and were listening to the angel, Mā'rȳ̆ Măg-đa-lē'nē̍ was seeking the disciples, to tell them that the tomb was open, and the body of Jē'şus was not there; for she did not know that he had risen. She found Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him!"

Then Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn at once went as quickly as they could go, to the tomb. Jŏhn outran Pē'tẽr, and came first to the tomb, perhaps because he was the youngest. But when he saw the open door, and the broken seal, and the stone lying at one side, he stood still for a moment. Jŏhn stooped and looked into the cave, and he could see the linen cloths that had been wrapped around the body of Jē′ṣus lying together. But when Pē′tẽr came up, he did not wait, but pressed at once into the tomb; and then Jŏhn followed him, and he too walked into the cave. Now he could see not only the long strips of linen rolled up; but in another place, carefully folded, the napkin that had been tied over the face of Jē′ṣus.

Then suddenly it flashed upon the mind of Jŏhn, "Jē′ṣus has risen from the dead!" For he had not seen the angel, nor heard his words. From that moment Jŏhn believed that Jē′ṣus was once more living. Both Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn went away, to think of the strange things they had seen. And very soon Mā′rȳ̆ Măg-da-lē′nė̂ came back to the tomb. No one was there, for both the women and the disciples had gone away. Mā′rȳ̆ Măg-da-lē′nė̂ did not know that Jē′ṣus had risen, for she had not heard the angel's message.

She wept as she thought of her Lord, slain by wicked men, and not even allowed to rest in his grave. And still weeping, she stooped and looked into the tomb. There she saw two men in white garments sitting, one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jē′ṣus had lain. They were the two angels whom the other women had seen, but Mā′rȳ̆ Măg-da-lē′nė̂ did not know this. One of them said to her, "Woman, why do you weep?"

She answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord; and I do not know where they have laid him."

Something caused her to turn around; and she saw a man standing beside her. It was Jē′ṣus; but her eyes were held for a moment from knowing him. He said to her, "Woman, why do you weep?"

She supposed that he was the gardener, and said, hardly looking at him, "Sir, if you have carried him out of this place, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

Then the stranger spoke her name, "Mā′rȳ̆!" and she knew that he was Jē′ṣus, no longer dead, but living. She turned around and fell down before him, and was about to seize his feet, as she said, "My Master!"

But Jē′ṣus said to her, "Do not take hold of me; I am not yet going away to my Father. But go to my brothers, and say to them, I go up to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and your God!"

Mā″rȳ̆ Măg-da-lē′nė came and told the disciples how she had seen the Lord, and how he had spoken these things to her. So this was the first time that any one saw Jē′ṣus after he rose from the dead.

You remember that the other women, another Mā′rȳ̆, and Så-lō′mė, and the rest, had not seen the risen Chrīst, but they had seen an angel, who told them that he had risen, and would meet his disciples in Găl′ĭ-lee. They went into the city, and were looking for the disciples, when suddenly Jē′ṣus himself stood before them, and said, "All hail!" That means, "A welcome to all of you!" They fell down before him, and worshipped him. And Jē′ṣus said to them, as he had said to Mā′rȳ̆ Măg-da-lē′nė, only a few moments before, "Do not be afraid; but find my brothers, and tell them to go into Găl′ĭ-lee, and they shall see me there."

And this was the second time that Jē′ṣus showed himself living on that day when he arose.

On that same day two of the followers of Jē′ṣus were walking out of Jė-ru̥′så-lĕm to a village called Ĕm-mā′us, about seven miles away. While they were talking over the strange happenings of the day, they saw that a stranger was walking beside them. It was Jē′ṣus, their risen Lord, but they were held back from knowing him. The stranger said to them, "What words are these that you are speaking with each other, which seem to make you so sad?"

One of the two men, named Clē′o-păs, answered, "Are you even a stranger in Jė-ru̥′så-lĕm, and have not heard of what things have taken place there in the last few days?"

The stranger said, "What things?"

And they said, "The things with regard to Jē′ṣus of Năz′a-rĕth, who was a prophet mighty in his acts and his words before God and all the people; how the chief priests and our rulers caused him to be sentenced to death, and how he died on the cross. But we hoped that he was the promised One, who was to save Ĭṣ′ra-el. And now it is the third day since he was put to death. And to-day some women of our company who were early at the tomb surprised us with the news that the tomb was empty, his body was not there; and they had seen a vision of angels, who said that Jē′ṣus was alive. Then some of us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

Then the stranger said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe what the prophets have said! Was it not needful for the Chrīst to suffer these things, and then to enter in his glory?"

Then he began with the books of Mō′şeş, and went through the prophets, and showed them in all the Scriptures the meaning of all that was told about Chrīst. And as they went on, they came to the village to which they were going, and he acted as though he would go on beyond it. Then they urged and persuaded him to stay with them. They said, "Abide with us, for it is now almost evening, and the day is at its close."

And he went in with them, and sat down with them to a supper. As they were about to eat he took the loaf of bread into his hands, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to them. And at that moment their eyes were opened, and they knew that he was the Lord; and he passed out of their sight. They said to each other, "Was not our heart burning within us while he talked to us on the road, and while he opened to us the words of the Scriptures?"

This was the third time that Jē′şus showed himself on that day. These two men hastened to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm that night to tell what they had seen. And they found ten of the disciples met together and saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has been seen by Sī′mon Pē′tẽr."

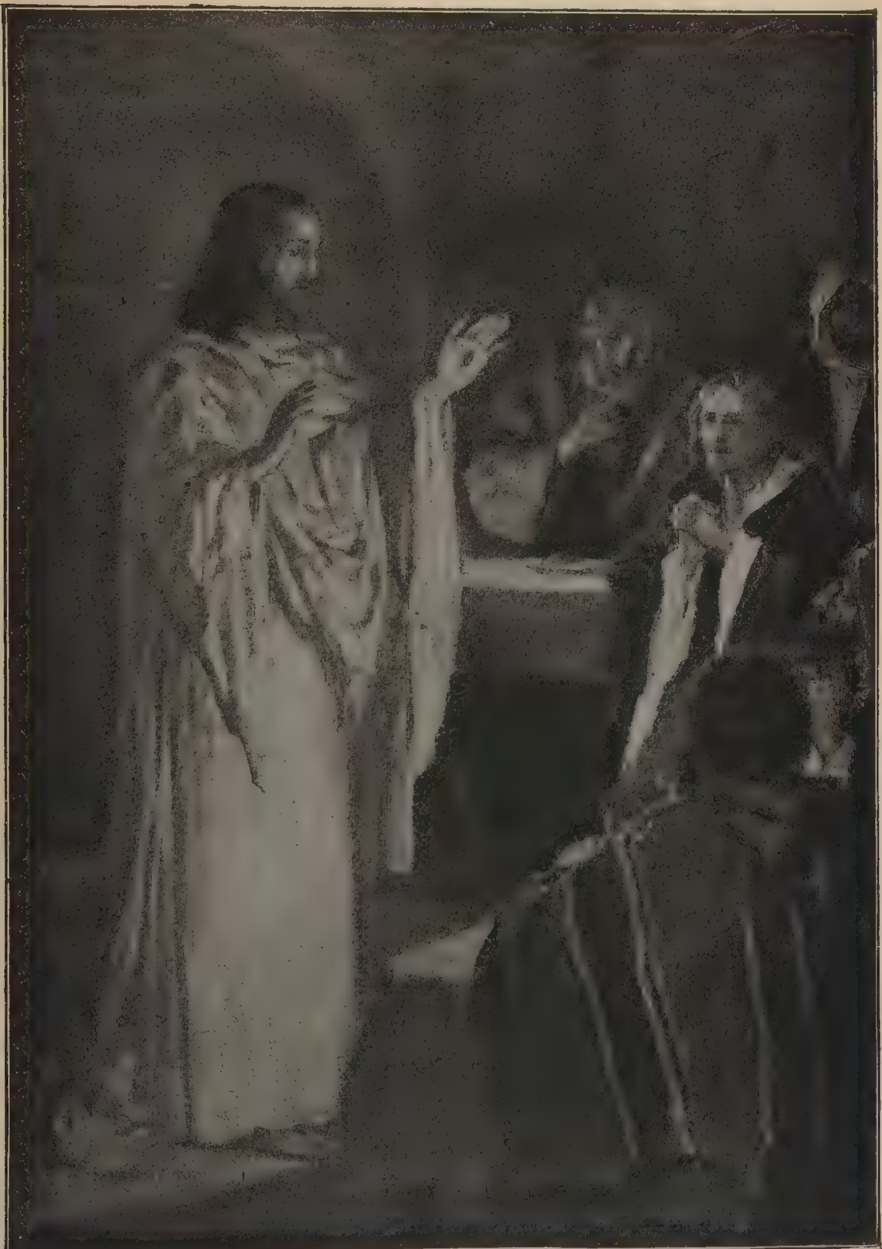
We do not know what Jē′şus said to Pē′tẽr; but this was the fourth time that he was seen living on that day when he arose.

The ten disciples and other followers of Jē′şus were together in a room on that night, and the doors were shut. Suddenly Jē′şus himself was seen standing among them. He said, "Peace be unto you!"

Some of them were alarmed when they saw him, and thought that he must be a spirit. But he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do fears come to you? Look at the wounds in my hands and my feet! Handle me, and see. A spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see that I have."

And he showed them his hands and his side. They could scarcely believe for the joy of seeing him again. He said, "Have you here anything to eat?"

They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of a honeycomb, and he ate before them. And he said, "This is what I told you while I was with you, that everything written of me in the law of Mō′şeş, and in the prophets, and in the Psälms, must come to pass. It was



RISEN CHRIST BLESSING HIS DISCIPLES.

needful that Chrīst should suffer thus, and should rise from the dead, and that everywhere the gospel should be preached in his name. I will send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in Jė̄-rṳ′-sȧ-lĕm after I leave you, until power shall come upon you from on high."

Then, when the disciples saw that it was really the Lord, and that he was alive from the dead, they were glad. And Jē′ş̧us said to them again, "Peace be to you, as my Father has sent me, even so I send you. May the Spirit of God come upon you!"

And this was the fifth time that Jē′şus showed himself alive on that day. This Sunday was the brightest day in all the world, because on it Jē′şus rose from the dead. And that Sunday in every year is called Easter Sunday.

Story Thirty-eight

THE STRANGER ON THE SHORE

Matthew xxviii : 16 to 20; Mark xvi : 14 to 20; Luke xxiv : 50 to 53; John xx ; 26, to xxi : 25; Acts i : 1 to 11; I Corinthians xv : 3 to 8.

WHEN Jē′şus showed himself to the disciples on the evening of the day of his rising from the dead, only ten of the disciples saw him, for Jū′das was no longer among them, and Thŏm′as the Twin (which is the meaning of his other name, Dĭd′ȳ-mŭs) was absent. The other disciples said to Thŏm′as, "We have seen the Lord!"

But Thŏm′as said, "I will not believe that he has risen unless I can see in his hands the marks of the nails on the cross. I must see them with my own eyes, and put my finger upon them, and put my hand into the wound in his side, before I will believe."

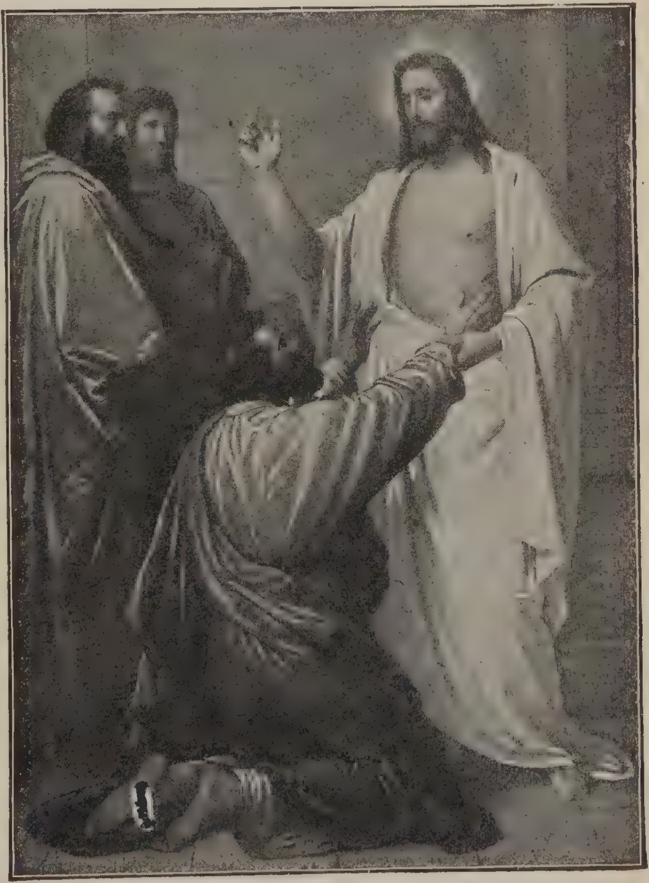
A week passed away, and on the next Sunday evening the disciples were together again, and at this time Thŏm′as was with them.

The doors were shut, but suddenly Jē′ṣus was seen again standing in the middle of the room. He said, as before, "Peace be with you."

Then he turned to Thŏm′as, and said to him, "Thŏm′as, come here, and touch my hands with your finger, and put your hand into my side; and no longer refuse to believe that I am living, but have faith in me!" And Thŏm′as answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jē′ṣus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

You remember that the angels had said to the women at the tomb of Jē′ṣus, that his disciples should go into Găl′ĭ-lee and there they would see the risen Lord. They went to Găl′ĭ-lee, and waited for some days without seeing Jē′ṣus. Finally Pē′tĕr said, "I am going fishing."



THŎM′AS ANSWERED, "MY LORD AND MY GOD!"

"We will go with you," said the others. There were with Pē′tĕr the two brothers, Jāmeṣ and Jŏhn, Thŏm′as and Nȧ-thăn′a-el, and two other disciples. They went out upon the lake in the fishing-boat, and worked all night, but found no fish. Just as the day was breaking they saw some one standing on the beach. It was Jē′ṣus, but they did not know him. He called out to them, as one friend calls to another, "Boys, have you caught anything?"

They answered him, "No."

He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you will find some fish."

They may have thought that standing on the shore he could see the signs of a shoal of fish, which they from the boat could not see. But the quick eyes of Jŏhn, the beloved disciple, were the first to see who was this stranger on the shore. He said to Pē′tẽr, "It is the Lord!"

When Pē′tẽr heard this, he flung around him his fisherman's coat, and leaped into the water, and swam to the shore to meet his Lord. But the other six disciples stayed in the boat, and rowed to the shore, dragging after them the net full of fishes. When they came to the land, they found burning a fire of charcoal, and a fish broiling upon it, and a loaf of bread beside it. They all knew now that it was the Lord Jē′ṣus, and he said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have now caught."

Sī′mon Pē′tẽr waded out to where the net was lying, filled with fish, and drew it to the shore. Afterward they counted the fish that were in it, and found them one hundred and fifty-three large fishes, besides small ones. Yet the net was not broken with all these fish in it. Jē′ṣus said to them, "Come now and breakfast."

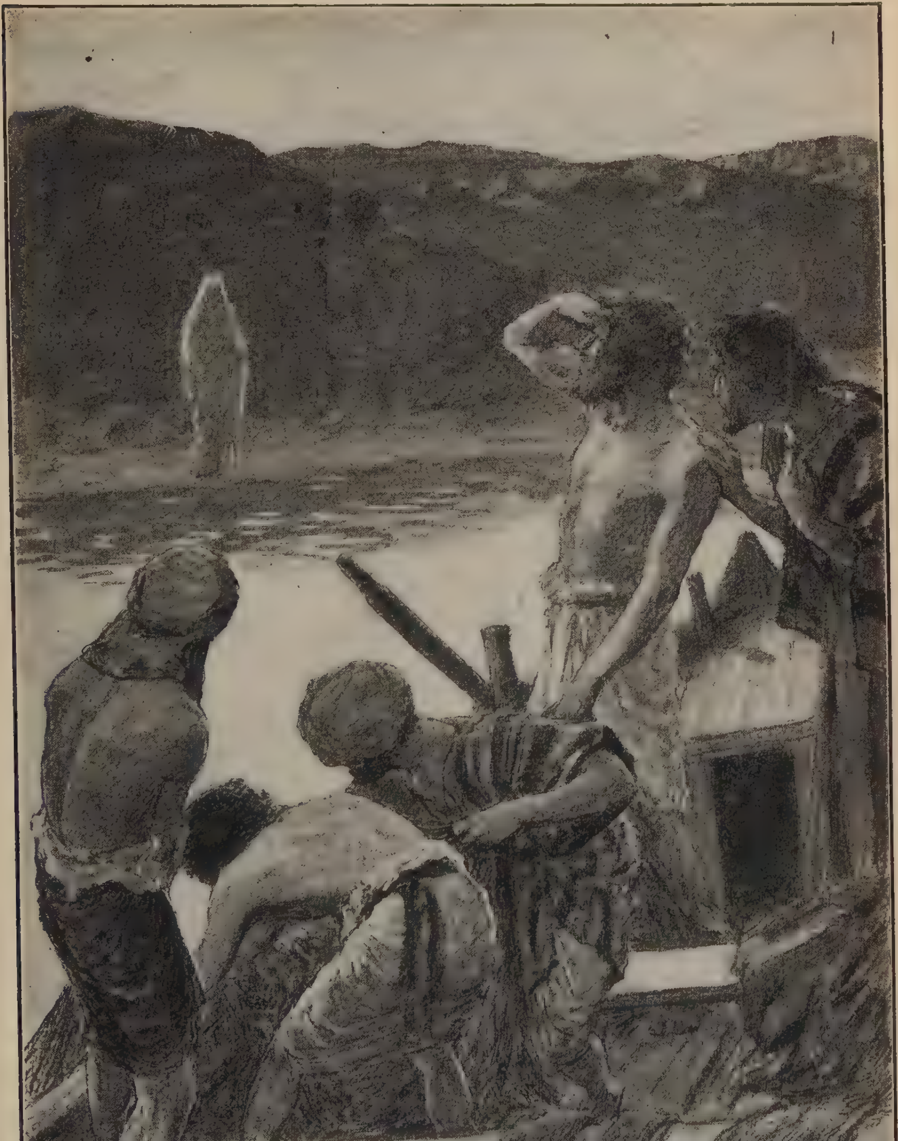
He took the bread, and gave it to them, and gave them fish also; and the seven disciples ate a breakfast with their risen Lord. This was the third time that Jē′ṣus showed himself to his disciples in a company after rising from the tomb, the seventh of the times that he was seen.

After the breakfast, Jē′ṣus turned to Sī′mon Pē′tẽr, the one who three times had denied that he knew Jē′ṣus, and he said to him, "Sī′mon, son of Jō′nas, lovest thou me?"

Pē′tẽr answered him, "Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

Jē′ṣus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

Then after a time Jē′ṣus said again, "Sī′mon, son of Jō′nas, dost thou love me?"



THE RISEN CHRĪST ON THE SHORE SEEN BY THE DISCIPLES IN THE BOAT.

Pē′tēr answered him as before, "Yes, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

And Jē′ṣus said to him, "Tend my sheep."

The third time Jē′ṣus said to him, "Sī′mon, son of Jō′nas, lovest thou me?"

Pē′tēr was troubled to have this question asked again and again, and he answered, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

Then Jē′ṣus said to him, "Feed my sheep." And Jē′ṣus added, "Follow me!"

And thus Pē′tēr, after his fall, three times declared his love to Chrīst, and was again called to his place among the disciples.

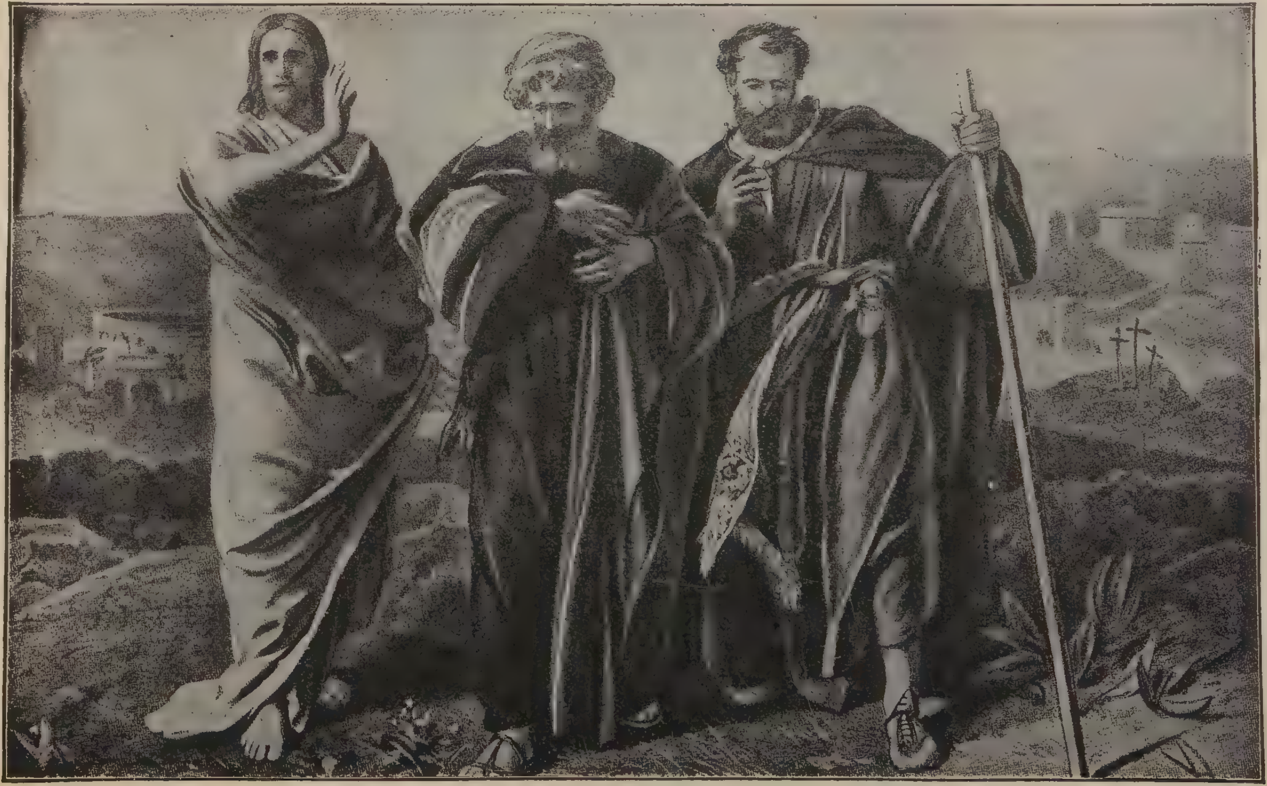
After this the followers of Jē′ṣus met on a mountain in Găl′ĭ-lee, perhaps the same mountain where Jē′ṣus had before given the teachings called "The Sermon on the Mount," of which we read in Story Thirteen. More than five hundred people were gathered at this time; and there Jē′ṣus showed himself to them all. He said to them:

"All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and preach my gospel to all the nations of the earth, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to keep all the commandments that I have given you. And I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

This was the eighth time that Jē′ṣus was seen after he rose from the dead. The ninth was when he showed himself to Jāmeṣ, not the apostle of that name, but another Jāmeṣ, who was called "The Lord's Brother," and may have been a son of Jō′ṣeph, the carpenter of Năz′a-rĕth, and of Mā′rȳ̆ his wife. We do not know what was said at this meeting; but from this time Jāmeṣ was a strong believer in Jē′ṣus.

Once more, the tenth time, the risen Saviour showed himself to all his eleven disciples. It may have been in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, for he told them not to leave the city, but to wait until God should send down upon them his Spirit, as he had promised. And Jē′ṣus said to them:

"When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you shall have a new power, and you shall speak in my name in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and in Jū-dē′ȧ, and in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and in the farthest parts of the earth."

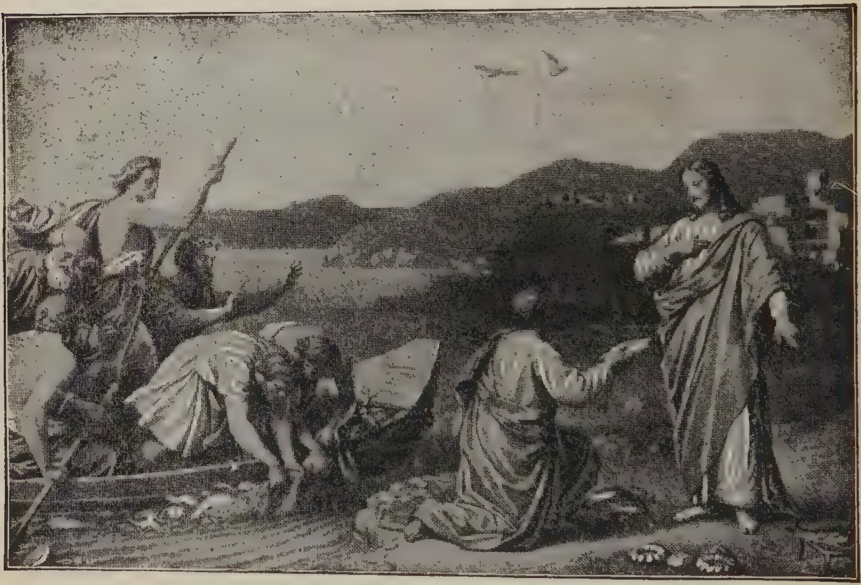


JĒ′ṢUS TALKS WITH TWO OF HIS FOLLOWERS ON THE WALK TO ĔM-MĀ′US.

Jē′ṣus led his disciples out of the city and over the Mount of Ŏl′ĭveṣ, near to the village of Bĕth′a-nȳ. And he lifted up his hands in blessing upon them; and while he was blessing them, he began to rise in the air, higher and higher, until a cloud covered him, and the disciples saw him no more.

While they were looking up toward heaven, they found two men, like angels, with shining garments, standing by them. These men said:

"O ye men of Găl′ĭ-lee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This Jē′ṣus, who has been taken up from you, shall come again from heaven to earth, as you have seen him go up from earth to heaven!"



THE NET FULL.

Then the disciples were glad. They worshipped their risen Lord Jē′ṣus, now gone up to heaven; and they went again to Jė-rụ′-să-lĕm. And they were constantly in the Temple, praising and giving thanks to God.

Part Seventh

Stories of the Early Church

Story One

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST DAYS

Acts i : 12, to ii : 47.

AFTER the Lord Jē′şus had gone away to heaven, the eleven disciples and a small company of those who believed in Chrīst were left alone on the earth. But they were not sad, as we should have expected them to be. They were very happy, for their Lord had left with them his promise to send power from God upon them. Every day they met together, and praised God, and prayed, in the large upper room where Jē′şus had taken his last supper with them.

The eleven disciples chose a twelfth man to take the place which had belonged to Jū′das the traitor. His name was Măt-thī′as. With these were Mā′ry̆, the mother of Jē′şus, and his brothers, and the women who had been at the cross and the tomb, and a number of others, men and women, who believed in Jē′şus as the Chrīst. The whole number of the company was one hundred and twenty people. In all the world these were all who at that time believed in Chrīst.

Ten days after Jē′şus went away to heaven there came a day which the Jewş called "The Day of Pentecost," or "The Fiftieth Day," for it was just fifty days after the Feast of the Passover. On that day the believers in Chrīst were all together in the upper room praying, when suddenly a sound was heard like the rushing of a mighty wind coming straight down from the sky. And what looked like tongues of fire seemed to be over the heads of all the company. Then the Spirit of God came upon them all, and they began to speak of Chrīst and of his gospel with a power that none of them had ever known before.

This strange noise as of a sounding wind was heard all over the city, and at once a great crowd of people came together at the place, to learn what the sound meant. There they saw these people, one hundred and twenty in number, singing, praising God, and telling of his wonderful works. And there was another marvelous thing. These people who had heard the noise, and had been drawn to the place, were Jewş from many lands, who had come up to Jḗ-rụ′sȧ-lĕm to worship, some from the lands far in the east, others from lands in the west, and others from isles of the sea. Every man heard these believers in Jē′şus speaking in the language of the land from which he had come! It was as though in every tongue of the earth men were telling of God's wonderful work.

"What does all this mean?" asked some; and others said, "These people act as though they were drunken with wine!"

Then stood up Sī′mon Pē′tẽr, with the other apostles around him; for from that time the twelve disciples were called "apostles," which means "The men sent forth," because they were now sent out to win the world to Chrīst. Pē′tẽr spoke in a loud voice to all the crowd of people, and said:

"Ye men of Jū-dē′ȧ, and all ye that live in Jḗ-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, listen to me. This which you see is what the prophet said long ago should come to pass, that God would pour out his Spirit upon men. This is the great day of the Lord, when every one who shall call upon the Lord shall be saved. Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth, one who wrought wonders and signs among you, you did put to death on the cross, by the hands of wicked men; but God has raised him up from death. We who have seen him living declare this to you, that he whom you killed on the cross is now the Lord and the Chrīst."

Then many of the people began to see how wicked had been the deed of their people in killing Jē′şus, whom God had sent to them as his Son; and they cried out to Pē′tẽr and to the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

And Pē′tẽr answered them, "Turn away from your sins, believe in Jē′şus, and be baptized in his name; and your sins shall be taken away, and you shall have this power of the Holy Spirit of God."

Then a great many people believed in Jē′şus Chrīst as their Saviour, and were baptized by the apostles. And on that day three thousand were added to the Church of Chrīst. And they, too, met with the believers daily in the upper room, and worshipped in the Temple, and listened to the teaching of the apostles.

And all the followers of Jē′şus were like one family of brothers and sisters. Those who had money gave it to help those who were in need, and some who had lands and houses sold them, and gave all for those who were poor. All were happy, praising God, loving and loved by each other. And every day more and more of those who were being saved were united to the Church.

Story Two

THE MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE

Acts iii : 1 to 31.

THE two apostles, Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn, were one day going up to the Temple at the afternoon hour of prayer, about three o'clock. They walked across the court of the Ġĕn′tīleş, which was a large open square paved with marble, having on its eastern side a double row of pillars with a roof above them, called Sŏl′o-mon's Porch. In front of this porch was the principal entrance to the Temple, through a gate which was called "The Beautiful Gate." At this gate, outside the Temple, they saw a lame man sitting. He was one who in all his life had never been able to walk; and as he was very poor, his friends carried him every day to this place; and there he sat, hoping that some of those who went into the Temple might take pity on him, and give him a little money.

In front of this man Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn stopped; and Pē′tẽr said, "Look at us!"

The lame man looked earnestly on the two apostles, thinking they were about to give him something. But Pē′tẽr said:

"Silver and gold have I none; but what I have that I will give you. In the name of Jē′şus Chrīst of Năz′a-rĕth, walk!"

And Pē′tĕr took hold of the lame man's right hand, and raised him up. At once the lame man felt a new power entering into his feet and ankle-bones. He leaped up, and stood upon his feet, and began to walk, as he had never done before in all his life. He walked up the steps with the two apostles, and went by their side into the Temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. The people who now saw him leaping up and running, knew him, for they had seen him every day sitting as a beggar at the Beautiful Gate; and every one was filled with wonder at the change which had come over him.

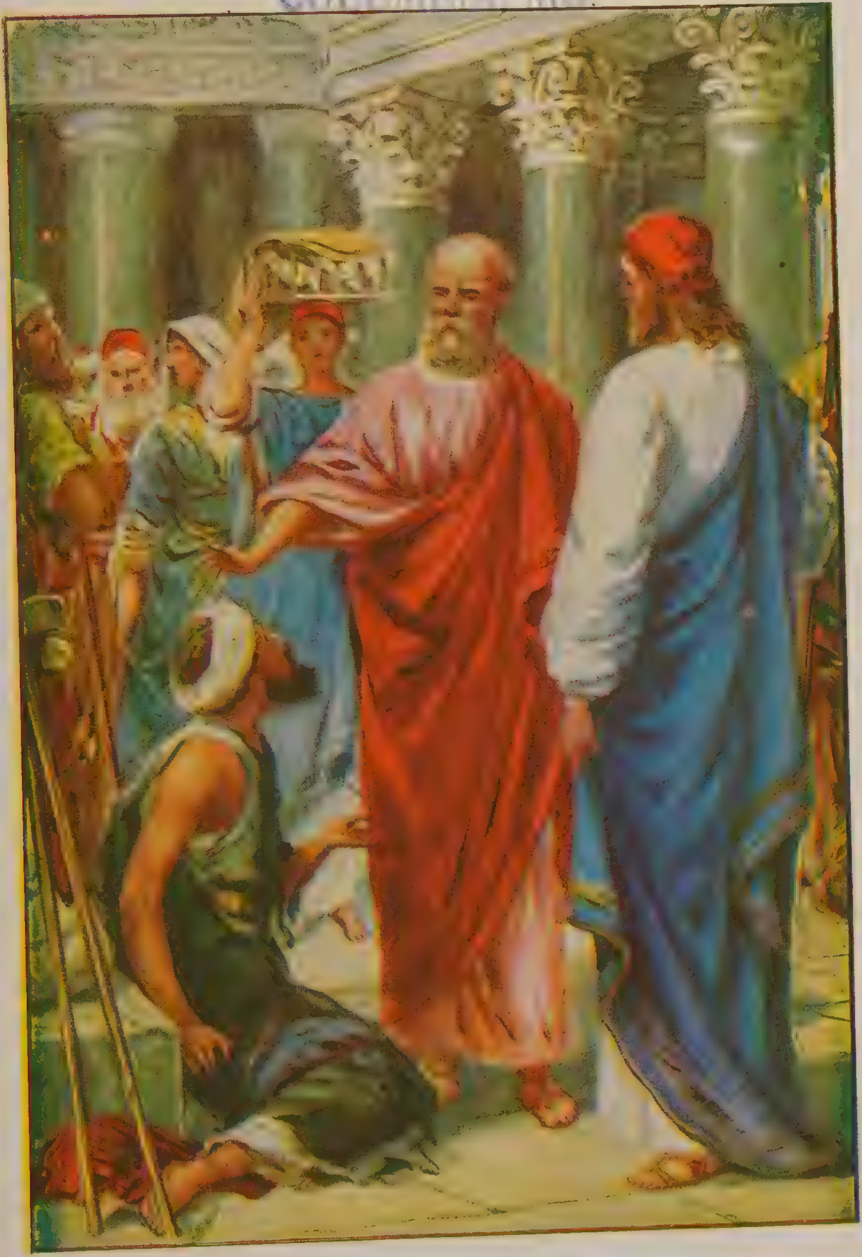
After worshipping and praising God in the Temple, the man, still holding fast to Pē′tĕr and Jŏhn, went out with them through the Beautiful Gate into Sŏl′o-mon's Porch. And in a very few minutes a great crowd of people were drawn together to the place to see the man who had been made well, and to see also the two men who had healed him.

Then Pē′tĕr stood up before the throng of people, and spoke to them.

"Ye men of Ĭş′ra-el," he said, "why do you look wondering on this man? or why do you fix your eyes upon us, as though by our own power or goodness we had made this man to walk? The God of Ā′bră-hăm, of Ī′şaac, and of Jā′cob, has in this way shown the power and the glory of his Son Jē′şus; whom you gave up to his enemies, and whom you refused before Pŏn′tĭ-us Pī′late, when Pī′late was determined to set him free. But you refused the Holy One and the Righteous One, and chose the murderer Bȧ-răb′bas to be set free in his place; and you killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead. We who have seen him risen, declare that this is true. And the power of Jē′şus, through faith in his name, has made this man strong. Yes, it is faith in Chrīst that has given him this perfect soundness before you all. Now, my brothers, I am sure that you did not know that it was the Son of God and your own Saviour whom you sent to the cross. Therefore turn to God in sorrow for this great sin, and God will forgive you; and in his own time he will send again Jē′şus Chrīst. God who has raised up his Son is ready to bless you, and turn away every one of you from his sins."

While Pē′tĕr was speaking, the priests, and the captain of the Temple, and the rulers, came upon them; for they were angry as they heard Pē′tĕr speak these words. They laid hold of Pē′tĕr and

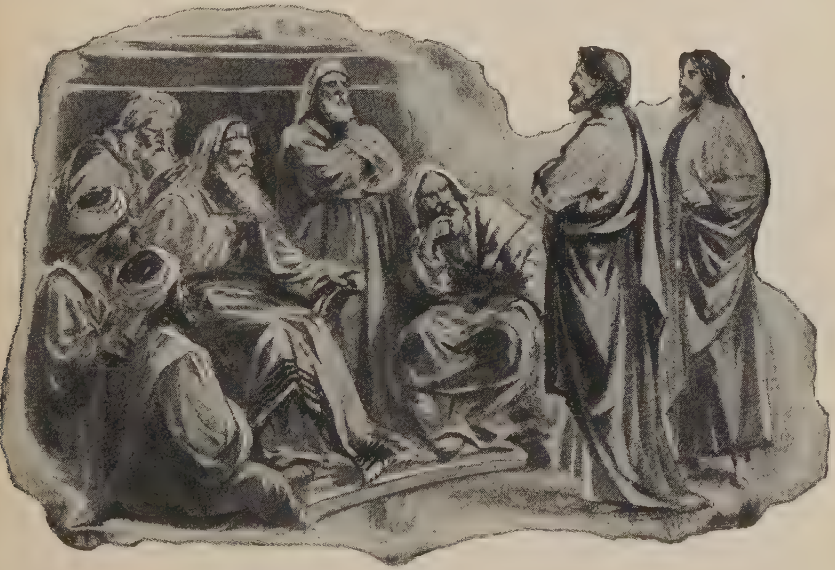
STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



PETER AND JOHN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE

Jŏhn, and put them into the guard-room for the night. But many of those who had heard Pē′tẽr speaking believed on Jē′ṣus, and sought the Lord; and the number of the followers of Chrīst rose from three thousand to five thousand.

On the next day the rulers came together; and Ăn′nas and Cā′ia-phăs, the two high-priests, were there, and with them many of their friends. They brought Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn, and set them before the company. The lame man who had been healed was still by the side of the two apostles. The rulers asked them:



PĒ′TẼR AND JŎHN BEFORE THE RULERS.

"By what power or through whom have you done this?"

Then Pē′tẽr spoke boldly to the priests and the rulers. He said:

"Ye rulers of the people and elders, if you are asking us about the good deed done to this man who was so helpless, how it was that he was made well, I will tell you that by the name and the power of Jē′ṣus of Năz′a-rĕth, whom you put to death on the cross, whom God raised from the dead; even by him this man stands here before you all strong and well. And there is no salvation except through Jē′ṣus Chrīst, for there is no other person under heaven who can save us from our sins."

When these rulers saw how bold and strong were the words of Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn, they wondered, especially as they knew that they were plain men, not learned in books, and not used to speaking They remembered that they had seen these men among the followers of Jē'ṣus, and they felt that in some way Jē'ṣus had given them this power. And as the man who had been healed was standing beside them, they could say nothing to deny that a wonderful work had been done.

The rulers sent Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn out of the council-room, while they talked together. They said to each other:

"What shall we do to these men? We cannot deny that a wonderful work has been done by them, for every one knows it. But we must stop this from spreading any more among the people. Let us command them not to speak to any man about the name of Jē'ṣus; and let us tell them that if they do speak, we will punish them."

JŎP'PȦ.

So they called the two apostles into the room again, and said to them: "We forbid you to speak about Jē'ṣus, and the power of his name, to any man. If you do not stop talking about Jē'ṣus, we will lay hands on you, and put you in prison, and will have you beaten."

But Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn answered the rulers:

"Whether it is right to obey you or to obey God, you yourselves can judge. As for ourselves we cannot keep silent; we must speak of what we have seen and heard."

The rulers were afraid to do any harm to Pē'tẽr and Jŏhn because they knew that the people praised God for the good work that they had done; and they would be angry to have harm come to them. For fear of the people, they let them go. And being let go, they went to their own friends, the company who met in the upper room, and there they gave thanks to God for helping them to speak his word without fear.

Story Three

THE RIGHT WAY TO GIVE AND THE WRONG WAY

Acts iv : 32, to v : 42.

IN those early days the Church of Chrīst in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm was like a great family; for each one was full of love for all the others. No one said of anything that he owned, "This is mine," but they had all things together, as belonging to all. Those who owned lands or houses sold them, and brought the money, and laid it down at the feet of the apostles. This was not because a rule was made commanding it; but because each member loved the rest, and wished to help them. The money that was given in this free way the apostles divided among those that were poor, so that no one among those who believed in Chrīst was in need.

There was one man especially who gave away all that he had to help the Church. His name was Jō′ṣeph, but he was called "Bär′na-băs," which means "The one who encourages," because he was so helpful and cheering in his words. Bär′na-băs sold his land, and gave the money from it to the apostles, that they might help with it those who were poor; and Bär′na-băs spent all his time, as well as his money, in doing good.

But there was another man in the Church at Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm whose spirit was not that of Bär′na-băs, to give up all and live fully for the Lord. This man, whose name was Ăn-a-nī′as, wanted to have the name of giving all, while he kept a part for himself. Ăn-a-nī′as sold some land which he had owned, and agreed with his wife Săp-phī′rȧ to give a part of the money to the apostles for the Church, and to keep back a part for themselves. This they had a right to do, or even to keep it all. But they agreed together to act as though they were giving all the money, and that was agreeing together to tell a lie.

Ăn-a-nī′as brought his money and laid it down before the apostles. But Pē′tẽr, by the power of God, saw what was in the thought of Ăn-a-nī′as, and said to him, "Ăn-a-nī′as, why has the evil spirit filled your heart to tell a lie by your act, in keeping back part of the money? Before it was sold was not the land your own? And after it was sold, was not the money in your hand? You have tried to tell a lie, not to man, but to God; and God will judge you."

As Pē′tẽr spoke these words, Ăn-a-nī′as fell down before him, and in a moment was lying dead upon the floor. The young men in the meeting took up his dead body, and wrapped it with long rolls of cloth, and carried it out and buried it, as was the manner of the Jewṣ.

After three hours, Săp-phī′rȧ, the wife of Ăn-a-nī′as, came into the room. She did not know that her husband was dead, for no one had told her; such was the fear upon all.

Pē′tẽr said to her, "Tell me, did you sell the land for so much?" And he named the sum that Ăn-a-nī′as had placed before him.

Săp-phī′rȧ said, "Yes, that was the price of the land."

But Pē′tẽr said to her, "How is it that you two people agreed together to bring down God's anger upon you? Those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out also!"

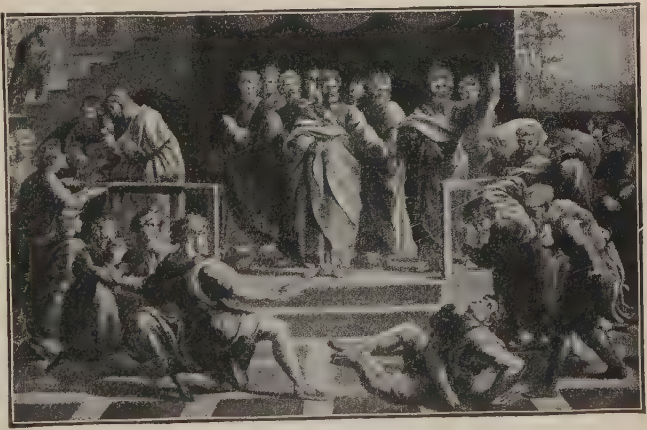
Then Săp-phī′rȧ fell down, struck dead by the power of God. The young men coming in found her dead; and they carried out her body and buried it beside her husband. A great fear came upon all the church, and upon all who heard how Ăn-a-nī′as and Săp-phī′rȧ died. After that no one dared to try and deceive the apostles in their gifts to the Lord's church.

And every day the apostles went to the Temple; and standing in Sŏl′o-mon's Porch, they preached to the people about Jē′ṣus, and salvation through his name. They wrought many wonders also in healing the sick. From the houses those that were sick were brought out into the street, lying on beds and couches, so that as the apostle Pē′tẽr passed by, his shadow might fall on them. And from the villages around Jė-ru̦′sȧ-lĕm they brought people that had diseases, or were held by evil spirits; and by the power of God in the apostles they were all made well.

All these wonderful works brought great multitudes to hear the apostles, as they spoke in Sŏl′o-mon's Porch. Very many believed in Chrīst as they heard, and men and women in great numbers were added to the church.

But all these things, the wonders wrought, the crowds brought together, and the people believing in Chrīst, gave great offence to the high-priest and the rulers: for they were the ones who had led in sending Jē′ṣus Chrīst to the cross, only a few months before. These rulers sent their officers, who seized all the twelve apostles, and thrust them into the common prison of the city. But at night, an angel of the Lord came, and opened the doors of the prison and brought the apostles out, and said:

"Go, and stand in the Temple, and speak to the people all the words of this life."



DEATH OF ĂN-A-NĪ′AS.

Then, very early in the morning, just at the breaking of the day, they went into the Temple and preached to the people. On that day the high-priest and all the rulers met together, and sent to the prison-house to have the apostles brought before them. But the officers who were sent did not find them in the prison. They came back to the rulers, and said:

"The prison we found shut and locked, and the keepers standing at the doors; but when we opened the doors and went inside we found none of the prisoners there!"

When the captain of the Temple and the rulers heard this they wondered greatly; for they could not understand it. Then came some one, who said, "The men whom you put in prison are standing in the Temple and are teaching the people!"

Then the captain of the Temple went with his officers, and again took the apostles, but without doing them any harm, for they were afraid that the people would stone them if they dealt harshly with these men, whom all held in high honor. They brought them into the hall where the rulers were met together. The high-priest said to them:

"We told you not to speak in this name, or about that man; and now you have filled Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm with your teaching, and you are trying to bring the blood of this man upon us."

But Pē′tẽr, in the name of all the apostles, answered the high-priest:

"We must obey God rather than men. You put Jē′ṣus to death, hanging him upon the cross. But the God of our fathers raised him from the dead, and lifted him up to be at his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give the forgiveness of sins. And we declare these things; and God's Holy Spirit tells us that they are true."

When the rulers heard these words they were made very angry, and thought of causing the apostles to be slain. But there was among them one very wise man, named Gȧ-mā′lĭ-el, a man who was held in honor by all the people. Gȧ-mā′lĭ-el asked to have the apostles sent out of the hall, while he would speak to the rulers. When the apostles were taken away, Gȧ-mā′lĭ-el said:

"Ye men of Ĭṣ′ra-el, be careful in what you do to these men. If what they say comes from themselves alone, it will soon pass away; but if it be of God, you cannot destroy it, and you may even find yourselves to be fighting against God. My advice to you is: do no harm to these men, and leave them alone."

The rulers agreed with these words. They sent for the apostles, and caused them to be beaten; then they commanded them again not to speak in the name of Jē′ṣus, and they let them go. The apostles went forth from the meeting of the rulers, happy in suffering for the name of Jē′ṣus. And in the Temple and among the homes of the people they did not cease from preaching Jē′ṣus as the Saviour and the Lord.

Story Four

STEPHEN WITH THE SHINING FACE

Acts vi : 1, to viii : 3.

WE have read how the members of the church in Jė̆-rṳ′-sȧ-lĕm gave their money freely to help the poor. This free giving led to trouble, as the church grew so fast; for some of the widows who were poor were passed by; and their friends made complaints to the apostles. The twelve apostles called the whole church together, and said:

"It is not well, that we should turn aside from preaching and teaching the word of God, to sit at tables and give out money. But, brethren, choose from among yourselves seven good men, men who have the Spirit of God and are wise, and we will give this work to them; so that we can spend our time in prayer and in preaching the gospel."

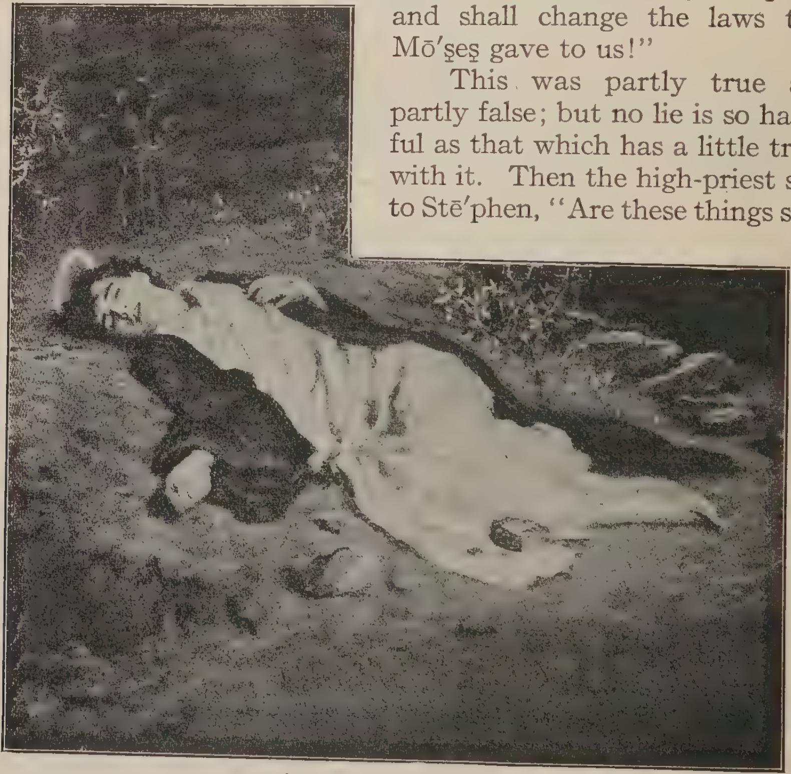
This plan was pleasing to all the church; and they chose seven men, to take charge of the gifts of the people, and to see that they were sent to those who were in need. The first man chosen was Stē′phen, a man full of faith and of the Spirit of God; and with him were Phĭl′ĭp and five other good men. These seven men they brought before the apostles; and the apostles laid their hands on their heads, setting them apart for their work of caring for the poor.

But Stē′phen did more than to look after the needy ones. He began to preach the gospel of Chrīst; and to preach with such power as made every one who heard him feel the truth. Stē′phen saw before any other man in the church saw, that the gospel of Chrīst was not for Jewş only, but for all men; that all men might be saved if they would believe in Jē′şus; and this great truth Stē′phen began to preach with all his power.

Such preaching as this, that men who were not Jewş might be saved by believing in Chrīst, made many of the Jewş very angry. They called all the people who were not Jewş "Ġĕn′tīleş," and they looked upon them with hate and scorn; but they could not answer the words that Stē′phen spoke. They roused up the people and the rulers, and set them against Stē′phen, and at last they seized Stē′phen, and brought him before the great council of the rulers. They said to the rulers:

"This man is always speaking evil words against the Temple and against the law of Mō′şeş. We heard him say that Jē′şus of Năz′a-rěth shall destroy this place, and shall change the laws that Mō′şeş gave to us!"

This was partly true and partly false; but no lie is so harmful as that which has a little truth with it. Then the high-priest said to Stē′phen, "Are these things so?"



STĒ′PHEN FELL ASLEEP.

And as Stē′phen stood up to answer the high-priest all fixed their eyes upon him; and they saw that his face was shining, as though it was the face of an angel. Then Stē′phen began to speak of the great things that God had done for his people of Ĭş′ra-el in the past; how he had called Ā′bră-hăm, their father, to go forth into a new land; how he had given them great men, as Jō′şeph, and

Mō′ṣeṣ, and the prophets. He showed them how the Ĭṣ′ra-el-ītes had not been faithful to God who had given them such blessings. Then Stē′phen said:

"You are a people with hard hearts and stiff necks, who will not obey the words of God and his Spirit. As your fathers did, so you do also. Your fathers killed the prophets whom God sent to them; and you have slain Jē′ṣus, the Righteous One!"

As they heard these things, they became so angry against Stē′phen that they gnashed on him with their teeth, like wild beasts. But Stē′phen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up toward heaven with his shining face; and he saw the glory of God, and Jē′ṣus standing on God's right hand, and he said:

"I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God!"

But they cried out with angry voices, and rushed upon him, and dragged him out of the council-room, and outside the wall of the city. And there they threw stones upon him to kill him, while Stē′phen was kneeling down among the falling stones and praying:

"Lord Jē′ṣus, receive my spirit! Lord, lay not this sin up against them!"

And when he had said this he fell asleep in death, the first to be slain for the gospel of Chrīst.

Among those who stoned Stē′phen was a young man named Sạul. He showed his fierce hate against Stē′phen and against the gospel which Stē′phen preached by holding the loose garments which the slayers of Stē′phen flung off, so that they might the more easily throw the stones upon him. Sạul had heard Stē′phen speak; and he saw his glorious face, but he gave his help to those who killed him. And after Stē′phen had been slain, Sạul went out to seize those who believed in Chrīst. He dragged men and women out of their houses, and thrust them into prison. He went into the synagogues and seized them as they were worshipping, and stripped off their garments, and caused them to be beaten.

By the hands of Sạul and those who were with him the church of Chrīst, where so many had lived in love and peace, was broken up, and its members were scattered far and wide over the lands. The apostles stayed in the city, and no harm came to them, for they were kept hidden, but all the rest of the believers were driven away; and for the time the church of Chrīst seemed to have come to an end.

Story Five

THE MAN READING IN THE CHARIOT

Acts viii : 4 to 40.

WE have seen how the first church of those who believed in Chrīst was broken up, and its members were driven away by the fury and rage of its enemy, the young man Sạul. But as those who were scattered went into other places, they told the people about Chrīst and his gospel. And very soon new companies of believers in Chrīst began to rise up, all over the land. In place of one church in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm there were many churches among the cities and villages of Jū-dē′ȧ. Thus Sạul, for all his hate toward Chrīst, really helped in spreading the gospel of Chrīst.

Among those driven away by Sạul was a man named Phĭl′ĭp, not Phĭl′ĭp the apostle, but another Phĭl′ĭp, who had been one of those chosen with Stē′phen to care for the poor. This Phĭl′ĭp went down to the city of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, near the middle of the land; and there he began to tell the people about Chrīst. These people were not Jewş, but were of the race called Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş. The woman of Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, with whom Jē′şus talked at Jā′cob's well, was of this people

The Lord gave to Phĭl′ĭp the power to work many wonders among these Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş. At Phĭl′ĭp's word, evil spirits came out of men. Those who had the palsy were cured, and the lame were made to walk. The Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş saw these things done by Phĭl′ĭp, and they believed that he spoke to them the words of God. Very many of them became believers in Chrīst, and were baptized; and there was great joy in that city.

At that time there was in Sȧ′mā′rĭ-ȧ a certain man named Sī′mon, who had made the people believe that he had great power and could do wonderful things, by some magic that he used. But the works wrought by Phĭl′ĭp through the power of Chrīst were so much greater and more wonderful than his own, that Sī′mon himself listened to the teaching of Phĭl′ĭp, claimed to believe in Jē′ṣus, and was baptized. But his heart had not been touched; he thought only that Phĭl′ĭp's magic was better than his own, and he hoped to find out what it was, so that he too could use it.

The twelve apostles, you remember, were still in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm; for they did not leave the city when Sạul broke up the church. After a time Sạul ceased to trouble, and some of the believers began to go back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. A new church grew up in that city around the apostles, though it never became as large or as whole-hearted as had been the church of the early days.

News came to the apostles of the great work wrought by Phĭl′ĭp in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and they sent Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn to visit the new church in that place. Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn came to Sȧ′mā-rĭ-ȧ, and were glad when they saw how many and how faithful were the believers in Chrīst. They prayed for them, that the same power of the Hȯly Spirit that had come upon the disciples in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm might come upon those in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ; and the power of the Lord came when the apostles laid their hands on the heads of the believers.

When Sī′mon saw that this strange power of God came with the laying on of the apostle's hands, he offered Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn money, saying to them, "Sell me this power, so that I may give the Holy Spirit to those on whom I lay my hands."

But Pē′tẽr said to him, "May your silver perish with you if you think to buy the gift of God with money! You do not really belong to Chrīst, and your heart is not right with God. Turn away from this your sin, and pray God that he will forgive you. For I see that you are yet in your sins, sins that are as bitter as gall; and you are fast bound in evil as with a chain!"

Sī′mon could not understand this, but he said, "Pray for me to the Lord, that none of these evils that you have named come upon me!"

After this Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn preached among many villages of the Sȧ′măr′ĭ-tanṣ, and then they went back to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. Phĭl′ĭp's work in Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ was now done, and an angel of the Lord spoke to him, saying:

"Rise up, and leave this city; and go toward the south, on the road that goes down from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm to Gā′zȧ."

This was a road through a desert region, without villages or people; but Phĭl′ĭp at once obeyed the word that came from the

Lord. He left Să̍-mā′rĭ-ȧ and walked southward, until he came to the road between Jĕ̍-rṳ′să̍-lĕm and Gā′zȧ. While he was on this desert road he saw a chariot drawing near, and in it was seated a black man reading from a roll. This man had come from the land of Ē′thĭ-ō′pĭ-ȧ, in Africa, far to the south of Ē′ġy̆pt. He was a nobleman of very high rank, the treasurer of the queen in that land; and though he was not a Jew, he had taken a journey of more than a thousand miles to Jĕ̍-rṳ′să̍-lĕm, riding in his chariot all the way, that he might worship God in his Temple. He was now going back to his own land, and in his hands was the roll of the prophet Ī-ṣā′iah, from which he was reading aloud while he was riding on his journey.

As the chariot of this black man came in sight, the Spirit of the Lord said to Phĭl′ĭp, "Go near, and stand close by the chariot."

And Phĭl′ĭp ran toward the chariot, and spoke to the man, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

The nobleman answered him, "How can I understand it, unless some one tells me what it means? Can you show me? If you can, come up into the chariot and sit with me."

Then Phĭl′ĭp came up and sat down in the chariot. The place where he was reading was the fifty-third chapter of Ī′ṣā′iah, with words like these:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter,
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,
So he openeth not his mouth.
His story who shall tell?
For his life is taken from the earth."

These are the words that the prophet spoke of Jē′ṣus many hundreds of years before he came to the earth. Phĭl′ĭp began with those words, and told the Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-an nobleman all about Chrīst. And the man believed, and took into his heart the word of the Lord. As they went on the way, they came to some water, and the nobleman said, "See, here is water! Why may I not be baptized?"

And Phĭl′ĭp said to him, "If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized."

And he answered, "I believe that Jē′ṣus Chrīst is the Son of God."

Then the nobleman gave order for the chariot to stand still; and Phĭl′ĭp and the man went down into the water together, and he baptized him as a follower of Chrīst. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Phĭl′ĭp away, so that the nobleman saw him no more; but he went on his way home, happy in the Lord.

Phĭl′ĭp went next to a city near the shore, and there he preached; and from that place he went northward through the cities by the Great Sea, preaching in them all, until he came to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, and at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ he stayed for many years.

Story Six

THE VOICE THAT SPOKE TO SAUL.

Acts ix : 1 to 31; xxii : 1 to 21; Galatians i : 11 to 24.

SA̤UL, the young man who had taken part in the slaying of Stē′phen, and who had scattered abroad the believers in Chrīst, was still the bitter enemy of the gospel. He heard that some of those who had fled away from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm had gone to Dȧ-măs′cus, a city outside of the Jew′ĭsh land, far in the north, and that there they were still at work teaching Chrīst. Sa̤ul made up his mind to destroy this new church in Dȧ-măs′cus, as he thought he had destroyed the church in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. So he went to the high-priest, and said:

"Let me have a letter to the chief of the Jewş in Dȧ-măs-′cus. I have heard that there are some followers of Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth in that city; and I will go with some men, and will take these people, and bind them, and bring them in chains to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm."

The high-priest gave to Sa̤ul the letters that he asked for, and Sa̤ul found a band of men to go with him to Dȧ-măs′cus. It was a journey of about ten days, riding on horses or mules. While Sa̤ul was on his way to Dȧ-măs′cus he had time to think about Chrīst and his gospel. He saw again in his mind Stē′phen's shining face, and heard his words, he thought of the sweet and patient way in which the followers of Jē′ṣus had met their sufferings and their wrongs at his hand. Deep in Sạul's heart there arose a feeling which he could not put down, that the gospel of Chrīst was true, and that it was wicked for him to fight against it. Yet he still went on, firm in his purpose to destroy the Church of Chrīst.

At last he came near to Dȧ-măs′cus. Suddenly, at full noon, a light flashed from heaven, brighter far than the sun. For the time the light blinded Sạul's eyes, and it came so suddenly upon him that like a bolt of lightning it struck him down, and he fell upon the ground. In the midst of the light Sạul saw One whom he had never seen before. And a strange voice came to him, saying, "Sạul, Sạul, why are you fighting against me?"

And Sạul answered the voice, "Who art thou, Lord?" Then the answer came, "I am Jē′ṣus, whom you are trying to destroy!"

Then, trembling with surprise and alarm, Sạul said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

And the Lord said to Sạul, "Rise up, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

Those who were with Sạul wondered, for they had seen a light, and had heard a sound; but had beheld no face, and had heard no words; for the vision of Chrīst had come to Sạul alone. They raised him up from the ground, and found that his eyes had been made blind by the brightness of the light. They led him by the hand into the city, and took him to the house of a man named Jū′das. There Sạul stayed for three days in the deepest suffering of mind and body. He could see nothing, and he neither ate nor drank. But in the darkness he was praying to God and to Chrīst with all his heart.

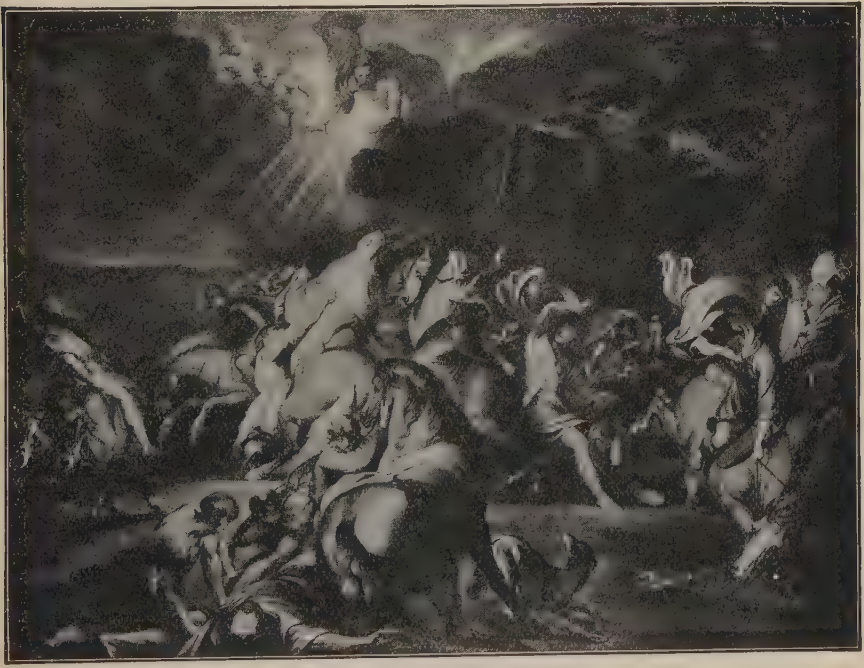
In the city of Dȧ-măs′cus there was a follower of Chrīst named Ăn-a-nī′as, a good man, held in respect by all who knew him. To this Ăn-a-nī′as the Lord spoke, calling him by name, "Ăn-a-nī′as."

And Ăn-a-nī′as answered, "Here I am, O Lord."

And the Lord said to Ăn-a-nī′as, "Rise, and go into the street named Straight, and find the house of Jū′das; and in that house ask for a man named Sạul from Tär′sus. This man Sạul is praying; and in a vision he has seen a man named Ăn′a-nī-as coming into his room, and laying his hands on him, to give him his sight."

This command from the Lord was a surprise to An-a-nī′as. He answered the Lord, "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man Sạul; what great evil he has done to all thy people in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm; and here he has an order from the high-priest to bind and to carry away all who call upon thy name! Shall I go and visit such a man as he?"

But the Lord said to Ăn-a-nī′as, "Go thy way; for I have chosen this man to bear my name before the people of all nations, and kings and the children of Ĭş′ra-el. And I will show him how many things he must suffer for my sake."



SẠUL HEARS A STRANGE VOICE.

Then Ăn-a-nī′as went, as the Lord had bidden him. He found the house, and he came to Sạul. He laid his hands on the head of Sạul, and he said, "Brother Sạul, the Lord Jē′şus, who met you in the way as you were coming, has sent me, that you may have your sight, and that the Holy Spirit may come upon you. Now, wait no longer, but rise up, and be baptized, and call upon the name of Jē′şus, who will wash away your sins."

Then there fell from the eyes of Sa̤ul what seemed like scales, and at once his sight came to him. Sa̤ul was baptized as one who believed in Chrīst, and food was given him, and he became strong in body and in soul. Sa̤ul had gone forth to bind the disciples of Chrīst in Dȧ-măs′cus; but now he came among them, no more as an enemy, but as a brother. And he went into the synagogues where the Jewş worshipped in Dȧ′măs-cus, and began to preach Jē′şus to them, declaring that Jē′şus is the Chrīst and the Son of God. And all that heard him were amazed, and they said to each other, "Is not this the same man who in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm wrought ruin among them who believed in this name? And did he not come to this place, intending to bind the believers in Jē′şus, and bring them before the chief priests?"

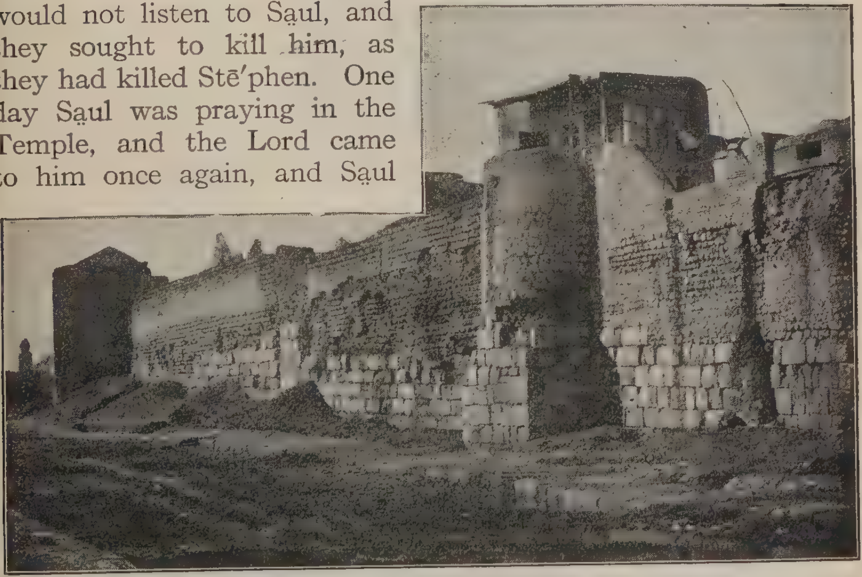
And Sa̤ul grew stronger and stronger in his spirit and in his words. None of the Jewş in Dȧ-măs′cus could answer him, as he showed that Jē′şus is the Anointed One, the Chrīst. But he did not stay long in Dȧ-măs′cus. After a time he left the city, and went away to a quiet place in the desert of Ā̇-rā′bĭ-ȧ, where he stayed for a year or longer, thinking upon the gospel and learning from the Lord.

And again Sa̤ul came to Dȧ-măs′cus, and again he preached Chrīst and salvation through his name, not only for Jewş, but for Ġĕn′tīleş, all people besides the Jewş. This made the Jewş in Dȧ-măs′cus very angry. They formed a plan to kill Sa̤ul, and they watched the gates day and night, hoping to seize him as he went out. But Sa̤ul's friends, the disciples of Jē′şus, brought him by night to a house on the wall, and let him down in a basket to the ground, so that he escaped from his enemies and went away in safety.

Sa̤ul now journeyed back to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. He had left it three years before, a bitter enemy of Chrīst; he came to it again a follower of Chrīst. But when Sa̤ul sought to join the believers in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, they were all afraid of him; for they could not believe that one whom they had known as the fierce destroyer of the church was now a friend to Jē′şus. Then Bär′na-băs, the man who had given all his land to the church, believed in Sa̤ul when he heard his story, and brought him to Pē′tẽr, and told how he had seen the Lord in the way, and how boldly he had preached in Dȧ-măs′cus in the name of Jē′şus.

Then Pē′tẽr took the hand of Sa̤ul, and received him as a disciple of Chrīst. For a few weeks Sa̤ul stayed in Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm; and he preached in the synagogues of the Jewş, as Stē′phen had preached before, that Jē′şus is the Saviour not only of Jewş but also of Ġĕn′tīleş ("Ġĕn′tīleş" was the name that Jewş gave to people of every other nation except their own).

When Sa̤ul preached that Ġĕn′tīleş might be saved in Jē′şus Chrīst, it made the Jewş angry, just as it had made Sa̤ul himself angry in other days to hear Stē′phen preach this same gospel. They would not listen to Sa̤ul, and they sought to kill him, as they had killed Stē′phen. One day Sa̤ul was praying in the Temple, and the Lord came to him once again, and Sa̤ul saw Jē′şus and heard his voice saying, "Make haste, and go quickly out of Jė-ru̧′sȧ-lĕm, for the people here will not believe your words about me."

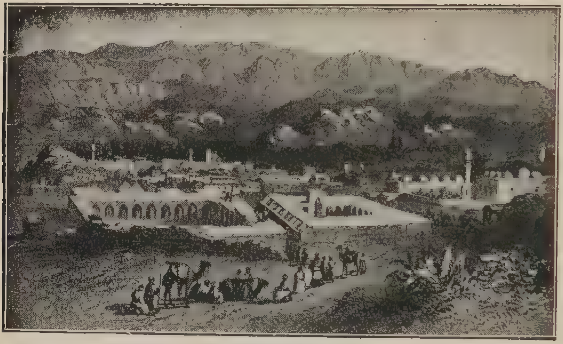


THE WALL WHERE SA̤UL WAS LET DOWN IN A BASKET, AS SHOWN TO-DAY.

Then Sa̤ul said to the Lord, "Lord, they know that I put into prison and beat in the synagogues those who believed on thee. And when thy servant Stē′phen was slain I was standing by and was keeping the garments of those who stoned him."

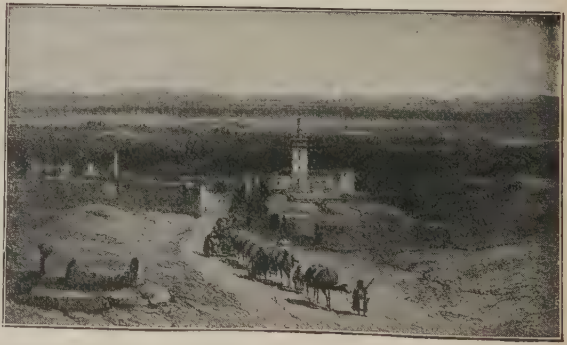
And the Lord said to Sa̤ul, "Go from this place; for I will send thee far away to preach to the Ġĕn′tīleş."

Then Sa̤ul knew that his work was not to preach the gospel to the Jewş, but to the Ġĕn′tīleş, the people of other nations. The disciples in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm helped him to get away from his enemies in the city, and led him down to a place called Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, on the seashore. There Sạul found a ship sailing to Tär′sus, a city in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor. Tär′sus was Sạul's birthplace and his early home. He went again to this place, and in that city he stayed for a few years, safe from the Jewş. He was a tent-maker, and he worked at his trade while preaching the gospel in Tär′sus. And we may be sure that Sạul would not be silent about the good news of the gospel. He preached in Tär′sus and in all the places near it.



DȦ-MĂS′CUS.

Now that Sạul the enemy had become Sạul the friend of the gospel, all the churches in Jū-dē′ȧ, and Sȧ-mā′rĭ-ȧ, and Găl′ĭ-lee, had rest and peace. The followers of Chrīst could preach without fear; and the number of those who believed grew rapidly, for the Lord was with them.



TÄR′SUS.

All through the land, from Găl′ĭ-lee down to the desert on the south, there were meetings of those who believed in Jē′şus as the Saviour, and the apostles Pē′tẽr and Jŏhn went among them to teach them the way of life.

Story Seven

WHAT PETER SAW BY THE SEA

Acts ix : 32, to xi : 18.

AS the church was now planted in many cities throughout the land of the Jewş, Pē′tẽr, who was a leader among the apostles, went from place to place visiting the believers in Chrīst and preaching the gospel. At one time Pē′tẽr went down to the plain beside the Great Sea, and came to a city called Lȳd′dȧ. There Pē′tẽr found a man named Æ′ne-ăs, who had the palsy, and could not walk, and had been lying on his bed eight years. Pē′tẽr said to him, "Æ′ne-ăs, Jē′şus Chrīst makes you well; rise up, and roll up your bed."

Then at once Æ′ne-ăs arose, and was well; and he took up the roll of matting on which he had been lying so long, and laid it away. All the people in Lȳd′dȧ and in Sā′ron heard of this great work, and many turned to the Lord.

There had been living at Jŏp′pȧ, not far from Lȳd′dȧ, a very good woman, whom everybody loved. She was called "The Gazelle," which is the name of a beautiful animal, like a deer. For her name in Hē′brew was Tăb′ĭ-thȧ, and in Greek was Dôr′cas, words which mean "Gazelle." Tăb′ĭ-thȧ, or Dôr′cas, was a believer in Chrīst, and like her Lord, she loved the poor and helped them, by her work and by her gifts.

While Pē′tẽr was at Lȳd′dȧ, Dôr′cas was taken ill and died. They laid her body in an upper room, and then they sent two men to Lȳd′dȧ for Pē′tẽr, begging him to come without delay. Pē′tẽr went to Jŏp′pȧ at once; and when he came to the house where the body of Dôr′cas was lying he found the room filled with widows and poor women, who were weeping, and showing the garments which Dôr′cas had made for them.

But Pē′tẽr sent them all out of the room; and when he was alone with the body of Dôr′cas, he knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the body and said, "Tăb′ĭ-thȧ, arise!"

And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Pē'tẽr she sat up. Pē'tẽr took her by the hand, and raised her up; then he called into the room the widows and the believers in Chrīst, and showed Dôr'cas to them, alive and well. The news of this wonderful work, of life given to the dead, amazed all the city of Jŏp'pȧ, and led many to believe in Chrīst. Pē'tẽr stayed many days in Jŏp'pȧ, at the house of a man named Sī'mon, who was a tanner, and lived near the sea.

At that time an officer of the Rō'man army was at Çæs-a-rē'ȧ, about thirty miles north of Jŏp'pȧ, beside the Great Sea. His name was Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs; and he was the commander of a company of a hundred soldiers. We would call such an officer "a captain," but in the Rō'man army he was called "a centurion." The centurion Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs was not a Jew, but a Ġĕn'tīle, which was the name that the Jewş gave to all people except themselves. Yet Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs did not worship idols, as did most of the Ġĕn'tīleş. He prayed always to the God of Ĭş'ra-el, and feared God, and gave to the poor; and he taught his family to worship the Lord.

One day, in the afternoon, Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs was praying in his house, when an angel came to him and called him by name, "Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs!" Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs looked at this strange and shining being, and he was filled with fear, but he said, "What is it, Lord?"

And the angel said to him, "Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs, the Lord has seen your gifts to the people and has heard all your prayers. Now send men to Jŏp'pȧ, and let them bring to you a man named Sī-mon Pē'tẽr. He is staying in the house of Sī'mon the tanner, who lives by the sea."

Then the angel passed out of sight, and Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs called two servants and a soldier who worshipped the Lord. He told them what the angel had said, and sent them to Jŏp'pȧ for Pē'tẽr. These men travelled all night, following the road southward by the Great Sea, and about noon of the next day they drew near to Jŏp'pȧ.

On that day, just before these men came to Jŏp'pȧ at noon, Pē'tẽr went up to the roof of the house to pray. He became very hungry, and wished for food; but while they were making ready the dinner he fell into a strange sleep, and a vision came to him. In his vision he saw what seemed to be a great sheet let down by its four corners from above. In it he saw all kinds of beasts, and birds, and creeping things. Some of these were animals and birds that the Jewş were allowed to eat; but many others were of kinds that

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

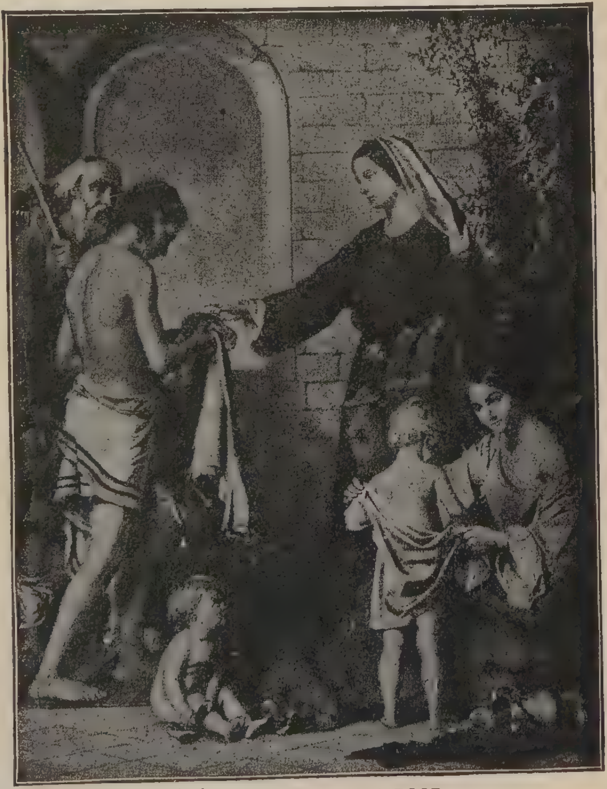
THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER IN JOPPA AS IT NOW IS

the old law forbade the Jewş to eat; and such as were forbidden, the Jewş called "common" and "unclean." Pē'tẽr saw in this great sheet many beasts, and birds, and creeping things that in his sight were common and unclean. As he looked, he heard a voice saying to him, "Rise, Pē'tẽr; kill and eat."

Pē'tẽr had always been very strict in keeping the Jew'ĭsh rules about food, and he answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

Then he heard the voice saying to him, "What God has made clean, do not thou make common or unclean."

Three times Pē'tẽr heard these words spoken, and then the great sheet with all the living creatures in it was lifted up to heaven and passed out of his sight. Pē'tẽr knew at once that the vision and the words which he had heard must have a great meaning; but as he thought upon it he could not see what the meaning was. While he was thinking of the vision and wondering at it, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Pē'tẽr, three men are looking for you. Go down to the door and meet them; and go with them, without doubting, for I have sent them."



DÔR'CAS HELPING THE POOR.

Just at that moment the three men from Çæs-a-rē'à knocked at the door, and asked for Sī′mon Pē′tẽr. Pē′tẽr met them, and said to them, "I am here, the man whom you are looking for. For what reason have you come to me?"

And they said, "Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs, a centurion at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, a good man, one that fears God, and is well spoken of by all the Jewş, was yesterday commanded by a holy angel to send for you, and to listen to words from you."

Then Pē′tẽr called the men into the house, and heard all their story, and kept them there that night. On the next morning he went with them, and some of the believers from the church of Jŏp′pȧ went with the party. On the next day they came to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, and entered into the house of Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs. There they found Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs waiting for them, and with him a number of his family, and his friends. As Pē′tẽr came into the room, Côr′nē′lĭ-ŭs fell down at his feet, and was about to worship him; but Pē′tẽr raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself, also, am a man, and not God."

And as Pē′tẽr looked around he saw many people that had met together; and they were all Ġĕn′tīleş, men who were not Jewş. And Pē′tẽr said, "You know that it is against the law of the Jewş for a man that is a Jew to come into the house with one of another nation, or to meet with him. But God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. For this reason I came at once when I was sent for. Now I ask for what purpose you have sent for me."

Then Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs said, "Four days ago I was praying, at three o'clock in the afternoon, when a man stood by me, clad in shining garments, and he said to me, 'Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs, your prayer is heard, and your good deeds are known to God. Send now to Jŏp′pȧ, and send for Sī′mon, who is called Pē′tẽr.' I sent at once for you, and you have done well to come so soon. Now we are all here before God, to hear whatever God has given to you to speak to us."

Then Pē′tẽr opened his mouth, and began to speak; for he saw now what the vision meant which he had seen on the housetop. He said, "I see now that God cares for all men alike, not for the people of one nation only; but that in every nation those that fear God and do right are pleasing to him." Then Pē′tẽr began to tell the story of Jē′şus; how he lived, how he did good works, how he died, how he rose again, and how in Jē′şus Chrīst every one who believes may have his sins forgiven.

While Pē'tẽr was speaking the Holy Spirit fell on all who were in the room. And the Jewş who were with Pē'tẽr were amazed as they saw the Spirit of God given to Ġĕn-tīleş, men who were not Jewş. Then Pē'tẽr said, "Can any man forbid that these should be baptized with water, upon whom the Spirit has come, as he came upon us?"

Then by Pē'tẽr's command these Ġĕn-tīle believers with Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs were baptized as members of Chrīst's Church. And Pē'tẽr stayed with them a few days, living with Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs, and eating at his table, though he was a Ġĕn-tīle, something which Pē'tẽr would never before have thought it right for him to do. Soon the news went through all the churches in Jū-dē'ȧ that Ġĕn-tīleş had heard the word, and had been baptized. At first the Jew'ĭsh believers could not believe that this should be allowed; but when Pē'tẽr had told them all the story of Côr-nē'lĭ-ŭs and the angel, of his own vision of the great sheet full of animals, and of the Spirit coming upon the Ġĕn-tīleş, then they all praised God, and said, "So to the Ġĕn-tīleş, as well as to the Jewş, God has given to turn from their sins, and to be saved in Jē'şus Chrīst, and to have everlasting life."

LÝD'DȦ AS SEEN TO-DAY.

Story Eight

HOW THE IRON GATE WAS OPENED

Acts xii : 1 to 24.

YOU remember that in the years while Jē′şus was teaching, Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm and the part of the land near it was ruled by a Rō′man governor, whose name was Pī′late; and that he was the ruler who sent Jē′şus Chrīst to the cross. After some years, the emperor at Rōme, who ruled all the lands around the Great Sea, gave all the country of the Jewş to a man named Hĕr′od Ȧ-grĭp′pȧ, and made him king of Jū-dē′ȧ. He was the nephew of the Hĕr′od who killed Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst, and the grandson of the other Hĕr′od who killed all the little children of Bĕth′lĕ-hĕm, in trying to kill the little child Jē′şus, as we read in Story Three of Part Sixth. Hĕr′od Ȧ-grĭp′pȧ was the king of Jū-dē′ȧ when Pē′tẽr saw the vision on the housetop, and preached to the Ġĕn-tīleş, as we read in the last Story.

Hĕr′od wished to please the Jewş in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm; and he seized one of the apostles, Jāmeş, the brother of Jŏhn, one of the three disciples who had been nearest to Jē′şus. He caused his guards to kill Jāmeş with the sword, just as Jŏhn the Băp′tĭst had been killed by his uncle, Hĕr′od Ăn′tĭ-păs. When he saw how greatly this act pleased the chief priests and rulers, he laid hands on Sī′mon Pē′tẽr also, and put him in prison, intending at the next feast of the Passover to lead him forth, and to put him to death.

Pē′tẽr, therefore, was kept in the prison, with sixteen soldiers around the prison to guard him, four soldiers watching him all the time; but all the church prayed very earnestly to God for him. On the night before the day when Pē′tẽr was to be brought out to die, he was sleeping in the prison, bound with two chains, while guards before the door were watching. Suddenly a bright light shone in Pē′tẽr's cell, and an angel from the Lord stood by him. The angel struck him on the side, and awoke him, and said, "Rise up quickly."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

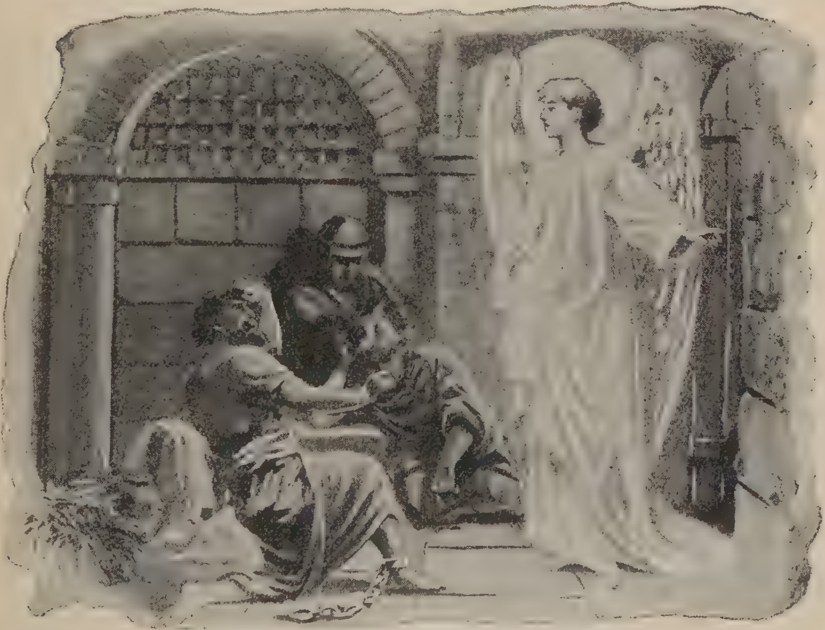
And as Pē′tēr awaked and stood up, his chains fell from his hands. And the angel said to him:

"Tie your girdle about your waist, and bind your sandals on your feet."

And Pē′tēr did as he was told, scarcely knowing what he was doing. Then the angel said:

"Wrap your cloak around you, and follow me."

And Pē′tēr followed the angel, thinking that he was dreaming.



AN ANGEL ENTERS THE PRISON CELL.

They passed the first guard of the soldiers, and the second; but no one stirred to hinder them. Then they came to the great iron gate on the outside of the prison; and this opened to them, as if unseen hands were turning it. They went out of the prison into the city, and passed through one street. Then the angel left Pē′tēr as suddenly as he had come to him. By this time Pē′tēr was fully awake, and he said:

"Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel, and has set me free from the power of King Hĕr′od."

Pē'tẽr thought of what he should do, and where he should go; and he turned toward the house of a woman named Mā'rȳ, who was near of kin to Bär'na-băs; and who had a son named Jŏhn Märk, then a young man, the same who many years afterward wrote "the Gospel according to Märk." At Mā'rȳ's house many were met together, and they were praying for Pē'tẽr.

Pē'tẽr came to the house and knocked on the outside door, and called to those who were within. A young woman named Rhō'dȧ came to the door. She listened, and at once knew the voice of Pē'tẽr. So glad was she, that she did not think to open the door, but ran into the house, and told them all that Pē'tẽr was standing at the door. They said to her, "You are crazed!"

But she said that she was sure that Pē'tẽr was there, for she knew his voice. And then they said:

"It must be an angel who has taken Pē'tẽr's form!"

But Pē'tẽr kept on knocking; and when at last they opened the door, and saw him, they were filled with wonder. With his hand he beckoned to them to listen; and he told them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And Pē'tẽr said to them:

"Tell these things to Jāmeş and to the other apostles.'

And then he went away to a place where Hĕr'od and his men could not find him. The morning came, and there was a great stir among the soldiers, as to what had become of Pē'tẽr. Hĕr'od the king sought for Pē'tẽr, but could not find him; and in his anger he ordered that the guards in the prison should be put to death. And not long after this Hĕr'od himself died so suddenly that many believed his death came from the wrath of God upon him. So Hĕr'od perished; but Pē'tẽr, whom he sought to kill, lived many years, working for Chrīst.

The Jāmeş of whom Pē'tẽr spoke, when he said, "Tell these things to Jāmeş," was not Jāmeş the apostle, the brother of Jŏhn, for already that Jāmeş had been put to death by Hĕr'od. He spoke of another Jāmeş, a son of Jō'şeph and Mā'rȳ, a younger brother of Jē'şus, one who was always called "the Lord's brother." This Jāmeş was a very holy man; and a leader of the church in Jė-rụ'sȧ-lĕm, where he lived many years. Some time after this Jāmeş wrote the book of the New Testament called "The Epistle of Jāmeş."

Story Nine

THE EARLIEST MISSIONARIES

Acts xi : 19 to 30; xiii : 1, to xiv : 28.

WE have seen how, after the death of Stē′phen, those who were driven out of Jė-ru′sȧ-lėm went everywhere telling of Jē′şus. Some of these men travelled as far as to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch in Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, which was a great city, far in the north, two hundred and fifty miles from Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. At first they spoke only to Jewş, preaching the word of Chrīst; but soon many Ġĕn′tīleş, people who were not Jewş, heard about the gospel and wished to have it preached also to them. So these men began preaching to the Ġĕn′tīleş, telling them about Jē′şus Chrīst and how to be saved.

The Lord was with the gospel, and in a little time many believed in Chrīst, a great number, both of Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş. Thus at Ăn′tĭ-ŏch in Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ arose a church where Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş worshipped together and forgot that they had ever been apart. The news came to the mother-church in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, that in Ăn′tĭ-ŏch Ġĕn′tīleş were coming to Chrīst. As all the followers of Chrīst in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm were Jewş, they were not sure whether Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş could worship together as one people. It was decided, after a time, that some wise man should go from Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch and see this new church of Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş. For this errand, they chose Bär′na-băs, the good man who had given his land to be sold to help the poor, and who had brought Sa̤ul to the church when the disciples were afraid of him. So Bär′na-băs took the long journey from Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch. When he saw these new disciples, so many, so strong in their love for Chrīst, so united in their spirit, and so earnest in the gospel, he was glad, and he spoke to them all, telling them to stand fast in the Lord. For Bär′na-băs was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.

The church at Ăn′tĭ-ŏch was growing so fast that it needed men for leaders and teachers. Bär′na-băs thought of Sa̤ul, who had once been an enemy, but was now a follower of Chrīst. Sạul was at that time in Tär'sus, his early home; and to this place Bär'na-băs went to find him. He brought Sạul to Ăn'tĭ-ŏch, and there Bär'na-băs and Sạul stayed together for a year, preaching to the people and teaching those who believed in Chrīst. It was at Ăn'tĭ-ŏch that the disciples were first called by the name Chrĭs'tianş.

At one time some men came from Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm to Ăn'tĭ-ŏch, to whom God had showed things that should come to pass. These men were prophets, speaking from God. One of them, a man named Ăg'a-bŭs, said through the Spịrit of God, that a great famine, a need of food, was soon to come upon all the lands. This came as Ăg'a-bŭs the prophet had said, in the days when Clạu'dĭ-ŭs was emperor at Rōme. Over all the lands food was very scarce, and many suffered from hunger. When the followers of Chrīst in Ăn'tĭ-ŏch heard that their brethren of Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm and Jū-dē'ȧ were in need, they gave money, as each one was able, to help them; and they sent Bär'na-băs and Sạul with it. Bär'na-băs and Sạul carried the gifts of the church to Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm, and stayed there for a time. When they went back to Ăn'tĭ-ŏch, they took with them the young man Jŏhn Märk, the son of the Mā'ry̆ to whose house Pē'tẽr went when he was set free from prison, as we read in the last Story.

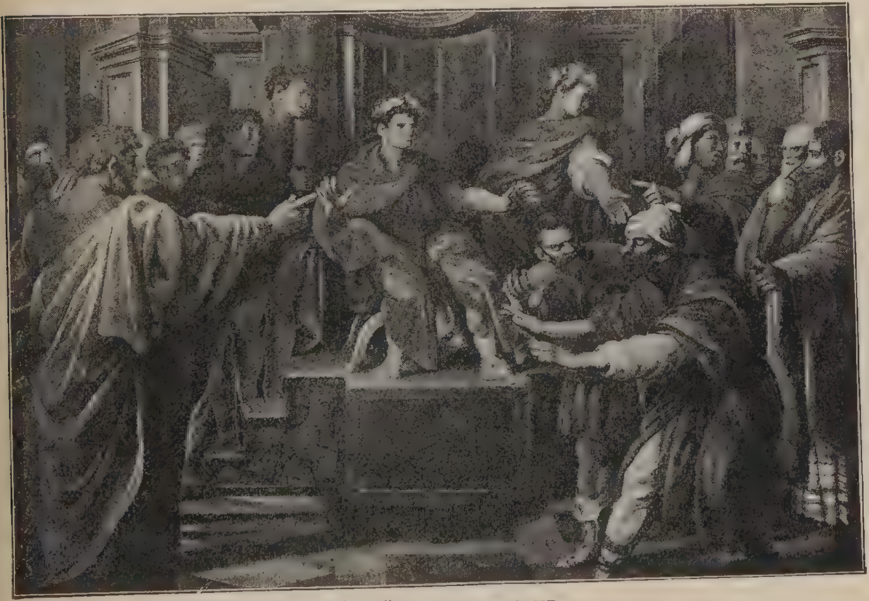
Some time after they returned to Ăn'tĭ-ŏch, the Lord called Bär'na-băs and Sạul to go forth and preach the good news of Chrīst to the people in other lands. At one time, when the members of the church were praying together, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to them, saying, "Set Bär'na-băs and Sạul apart for a special work to which I have called them."

Then the leaders of the church at Ăn'tĭ-ŏch prayed, and laid their hands on the head of Bär'na-băs and Sạul. And Bär'na-băs and Sạul went forth, taking with them Jŏhn Märk, the young man from Jė-rṳ'sȧ-lĕm, as their helper. They went down to the shore of the Great Sea at Sė-leū'çĭ-ȧ, and took a ship, and sailed to the island of Çy̆'prus. In that island they visited all the cities, and preached Chrīst in all the synagogues of the Jewş.

At a place called Pā'phos, in the west of the island of Çy̆'prus, they met the Rō'man ruler of the island, a man named Sẽr'gĭ-ŭs Pạu'lus. He was a good man, and sent for Bär'na-băs and Sạul, that he might learn from them of Chrīst. But with the ruler was a Jew named Ĕl'y̆-măs, who claimed to be a prophet, and who opposed Bär′na-băs and Sạul in their teaching, and tried to persuade the ruler not to hear the gospel.

Then Sạul, full of the Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on this man Ĕl′ỹ-măs, the false prophet, and said to him, "O thou man full of wickedness, thou child of the evil one, thou enemy of the right, wilt thou not stop to oppose the word of the Lord? The hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind for a time, not able to see the sun!"

And at once a mist and a darkness fell upon Ĕl′ỹ-măs, and he groped about, feeling for some one to lead him by the hand. When the ruler saw the power of the Lord in bringing this stroke of blindness upon his enemy, he was filled with wonder, and believed the gospel of Chrīst.



ĔL′Ỹ-MĂS STRUCK BLIND.

From this time Sạul ceased to bear his old name, and was called Pạul. He was no longer Sạul, but "Pạul the Apostle," having all the power that belonged to Pē′tẽr, and Jŏhn, and the other apostles.

From the island of Çȳ′prus, Pạul and Bär′na-băs and Jŏhn

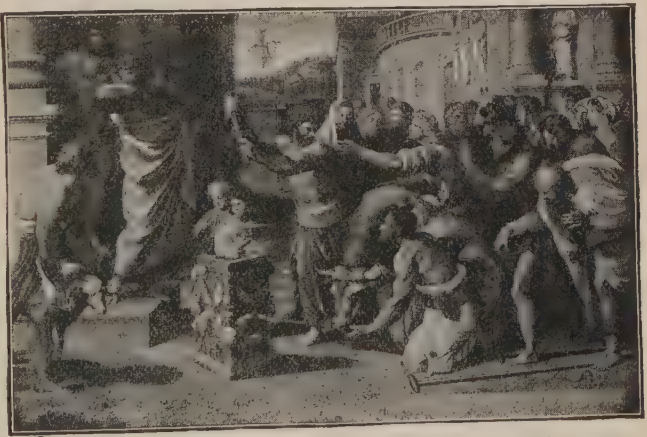
Märk sailed over the sea to a place called Pẽr′gȧ. At this place Jŏhn Märk left them, and went back to his home in Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm. But Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs went into the land of Ā′ṣiȧ Mī′nor, and came to a city called Ăn′tĭ-ŏch. This was not Ăn′tĭ-ŏch in Sy̆r′ĭ-a, from which they had come, but another Ăn′tĭ-ŏch in a region called Pī-sĭd′ĭ-ȧ. There they went into the synagogue, and Pa̤ul preached to both Jewṣ and Ġĕn′tīleṣ. Not many of the Jewṣ believed Pa̤ul's words, but a great number of the Ġĕn′tīleṣ, people who were not Jewṣ, became followers of Chrīst. This made the Jewṣ very angry, and they roused up against Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs all the chief men of the city, and they drove Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs away. They went to Ī-cō′nĭ-ŭm, another city, and there they preached the gospel with such power that many of both Jewṣ and Ġĕn′tīleṣ believed in Chrīst. But the Jewṣ who would not believe stirred up the city against Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs. They gathered a crowd of people, intending to seize the apostles and to do them harm, and to kill them. But they knew of the coming of their enemies, and as they had now done their work in Ī-cō′nĭ-ŭm, and had planted the church, they quietly went away from the city.

ĂN′TĬ-ŎCH IN SY̆R′Ĭ-A.

The apostles Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs next went to the city of Ly̆s′trȧ, in the land of Ly̆c-a-ō′nĭ-ȧ, and there they preached the gospel. There were few Jewṣ in that city, and they preached to the people of the land who were worshippers of idols. Among those who heard Pa̤ul speak at Ly̆s′trȧ was a lame man, who had never been able to walk. Pa̤ul fixed his eyes on this man, and saw that he had faith to be made strong. He said to him with a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet!"

And at the words the man leaped up and walked. As the people saw how the lame man had been healed they were filled with wonder, and said, in the language of their land, "The gods from heaven have come down to us in the forms of men!"

They thought that Bär′na-băs was Jū′pĭ-tẽr, whom they worshipped as the greatest of the gods; and because Pạul was the chief speaker, they thought that he was Mẽr-cū′rĭ-ŭs, the messenger of the gods. In front of their city was a temple of Jū′pĭ-tẽr; and the priest of the temple brought oxen, and garlands of flowers, and was about to offer a sacrifice to Bär′na-băs and Pạul as gods. It was some time before the two apostles understood what the people were doing. But when they saw that they were about to offer sacrifice to them, Pạul and Bär′na-băs rushed out among the people, and cried out, "Men, why do you do such things as these? We are not gods, but men like yourselves. And we bring you word that you should turn from these idols, which are nothing, to the living God, who made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things. It is God who has done good to you, and given you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling you with food and gladness."


PẠUL AND BÄR′NA-BĂS REFUSE THE SACRIFICE.

And even with words like these they could scarcely keep the people back from offering sacrifices to them. But after a time some Jewş came from Ī-cō′nĭ-ŭm. These Jewş stirred up the people against Pạul, so that instead of worshipping him, they stoned him, and dragged out of their city what they supposed was his dead body. Then they left him, and as the believers gathered around, weeping, Pạul rose up alive, and went again into the city. On the next day he journeyed with Bär′na-băs to Dẽr′bē. There they preached the gospel and led many as disciples to Chrīst. After this they went again to the cities where they had preached, to Ly̆s′trȧ in Ly̆c-a-ō′nĭ-ȧ, to Ī-cō′nĭ-ŭm and Ăn′tĭ-ŏch in Pĭ-sĭd′ĭ-ȧ, and to Pẽr′gȧ in Păm-phy̆l′ĭ-ȧ, and visited the churches which they had founded. They encouraged the believers, telling them to continue in the faith, and saying to them that those who would enter into the kingdom of God must expect to meet with trouble, and that God would give them a full reward.

Story Ten

THE SONG IN THE PRISON

Acts xv : 1, to xvi : 40.

AFTER Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs brought to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch the news that the Ġĕn′tīleş had turned to the Lord, a great question arose in the Church. Some of the strict Jewş said, "All these Ġĕn′tīle believers must become Jewş, and keep the Jew′ĭsh laws about food, and feasts, and washings and offerings."

Others said that the laws were made for Jewş only, and that Ġĕn′tīleş who believed in Chrīst were not called upon to live as Jewş. After many words on both sides, Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs, with other believers, went up to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm to lay this matter before the apostles and the elders of the Church. They listened to Pa̤ul's story of God's great work among the Ġĕn′tīleş, and talked about it, and sought God in prayer, and at last the apostles, and elders, and the whole Church in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm sent a message to the Ġĕn′tīleş who believed, telling them that Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş were alike before God, that both were saved by believing in Chrīst, and that Ġĕn′tīleş who believed were not called upon to keep the laws given to the Jewş only.

The apostles sent with Pạul and Bär′na-băs two men, Jū′das and Sī′las, to bring this news to the Church at Ăn′tĭ-ŏch. They came, and read the letter, which brought great joy to the Ġĕn′tīle believers. For now the Ġĕn′tīleş who believed in Chrīst were able to serve the Lord without obeying all the rules which the Jewş themselves found very hard to keep.

After a time Pạul said to Bär′na-băs, "Let us go out again and visit the brethren in the cities where we preached the gospel, and see how they are doing."

Bär′na-băs was willing to go, and wished to take again with them Jŏhn Märk as their helper in the work. But Pạul did not think it well to take with them the young man who went home in the middle of their journey, and left them to visit strange lands alone. Bär′na-băs was determined to take Märk, and Pạul refused to have him go, so at last Pạul and Bär′na-băs separated. Bär′na-băs took Märk, and went again to the island of Çȳ′prus. Pạul chose as his helper Sī′las, who had come from Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch, and Pạul and Sī′las went together through the lands in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor which Pạul had visited on his earlier journey. Everywhere they sought out the churches which before had been planted by Pạul and Bär′na-băs, and they encouraged the disciples to be faithful in the Lord.

When Pạul came to Dẽr′bė and Lȳs′trȧ he found a young man named Tĭm′o-thȳ̆, whose mother was of the Jew′ĭsh race and a believer in Chrīst. Tĭm′o-thȳ̆ had known the word of God from his childhood; he had given his heart to Chrīst, and all the believers in Chrīst at Lȳs′trȧ and Ī-cō′nĭ-ŭm knew him and spoke well of him. Pạul asked this young man Tĭm′o-thȳ̆ to leave his home and to go out with him as his helper in the gospel. Tĭm′o-thȳ̆ went, and from that time was with Pạul as a friend and a fellow-worker, dearly beloved by Pạul. Pạul, and Sī′las, and Tĭm′o-thȳ̆ went through many lands in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, preaching the gospel and planting the church. The Spirit of the Lord would not let them go to some places which were not yet ready for the gospel, and they came down to Trō′ăs, which was on the sea, and opposite to the land of Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ in Europe.

While they were at Trō′ăs a vision came to Pạul in the night.

He saw a man of Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ standing before him, and pleading with him, and saying, "Come over into Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ, and help us."

When Pạul told this vision to his friends they all knew that this was a call from the Lord to carry the gospel of Chrīst to Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ. As soon as they could find a vessel sailing across the sea they went on board, and with them went a doctor named Lụke, who at this time joined Pạul. Lụke stayed with Pạul for many years, and Pạul called him "the beloved physician." Afterward Lụke wrote two books which are in the Bible, "The Gospel according to Lụke," and "The Acts of the Apostles."

Pạul and his three friends set sail from Trō′ăs; and on the third day they came to the city of Phĭ-lĭp′pī, in Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ; and there they stayed for some days. There was no synagogue in that city, and scarcely any Jewş; and on the Sabbath-day Pạul and his company went out of the city gate to the river-side, where was a place of prayer. There they sat down and talked with a few women, who had met together to pray. One of these was a woman named Ly̆d′ĭ-ȧ, who had come from Thȳ-a-tī′rȧ in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, and was a seller of purple dyes. She was one who was seeking after God, and the Lord opened her heart to hear the words of Pạul, and to believe in Chrīst. She was baptized, the first one brought to the Lord in all Europe; and with her all in her house were baptized also. Ly̆d′ĭ-ȧ said to Pạul and to his company, "If you count me as one who is faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and stay there."

She urged them so strongly that they all went to Ly̆d′ĭ-ȧ's house, and made it their home while they were in the city. One day while they were going to the place of prayer, a young woman who had in her an evil spirit, met them. She was a slave-girl, and through the spirit in her, her owners pretended to tell what was to happen; and by her they made great gains of money. As soon as she saw Pạul and his friends, she cried out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who tell you the way to be saved."

And this she did day after day, following Pạul and his companions. Pạul was troubled to see her held in the power of the evil spirit; and he spoke to the spirit, "I command thee in the name of Jē′şus Chrīst to come out of her!"

And in that very hour the spirit left the girl. But with the evil spirit gone from her, there were no more gains to her masters. They were very angry, and took hold of Pạul and Sī′las, and dragged them before the rulers of the city, and they said, "These men, who are Jews̹, are making great trouble in our city, and are teaching the people to do what is against the law for Rō′mans̹."

And they stirred up the crowd of the lowest of the people against them. To please the throng, the rulers stripped off their garments from Pa̤ul and Sī′las, and commanded that they should be beaten with rods. When they had received many cruel blows, they were thrown into the prison, and the jailor was charged to keep them carefully. He took them, all beaten and wounded, into the dungeon, which was in the very middle of the prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

But about midnight Pa̤ul and Sī′las were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken; every door was opened and all the chains on the prisoners were loosed, and all could have gone out free if fear had not held them in their places. The jailor of the prison was suddenly roused out of sleep, and saw the prison-doors wide open. By the law of the Rō′mans̹, a man in charge of a prisoner must take his place if his prisoner escaped, and the jailor, thinking that the men in the prison had gotten away, drew out his sword, and was just going to kill himself, when Pa̤ul called out, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."

PHĬ-LĬP′PĪ.

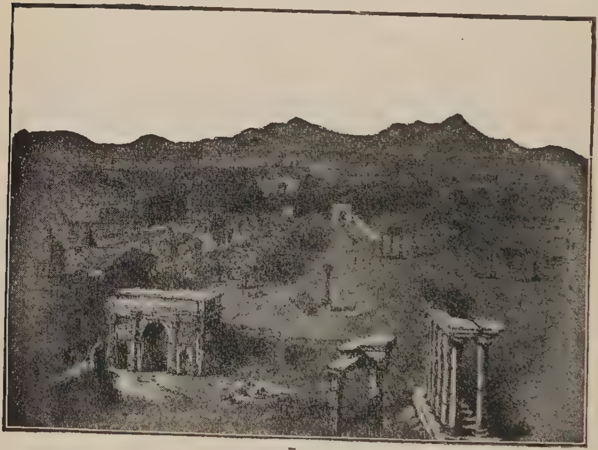
Then the jailor called for lights, and sprang into the room where Pa̤ul and Sī′las were, and, trembling with fear, fell down at their feet and cried out, "O, sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jē′s̹us Chrīst, and you shall be saved, and those in your house with you."

And that night, in the prison, they spoke the word of the Lord to the jailor, and to all that were with him. The jailor washed their wounds, and he and all his family were baptized in that hour. Afterward, he brought them from the prison into his own house, and set food before them. And the jailor and his household were all happy in the Lord, believing in Chrīst.

The rulers of the city knew well that they had done an unjust act in beating Pạul and Sī′las, and thrusting them into prison; but they did not know that Pạul and Sī′las, though Jewş, were also free citizens of Rōme, whom it was unlawful to beat or to put in to prison without a fair trial. In the morning the rulers sent their officers to the jailor, saying, "Let those men go." And the jailor brought their words to Pạul, and said, "The rulers have sent to me to let you go; therefore, now come out of the prison, and go in peace."

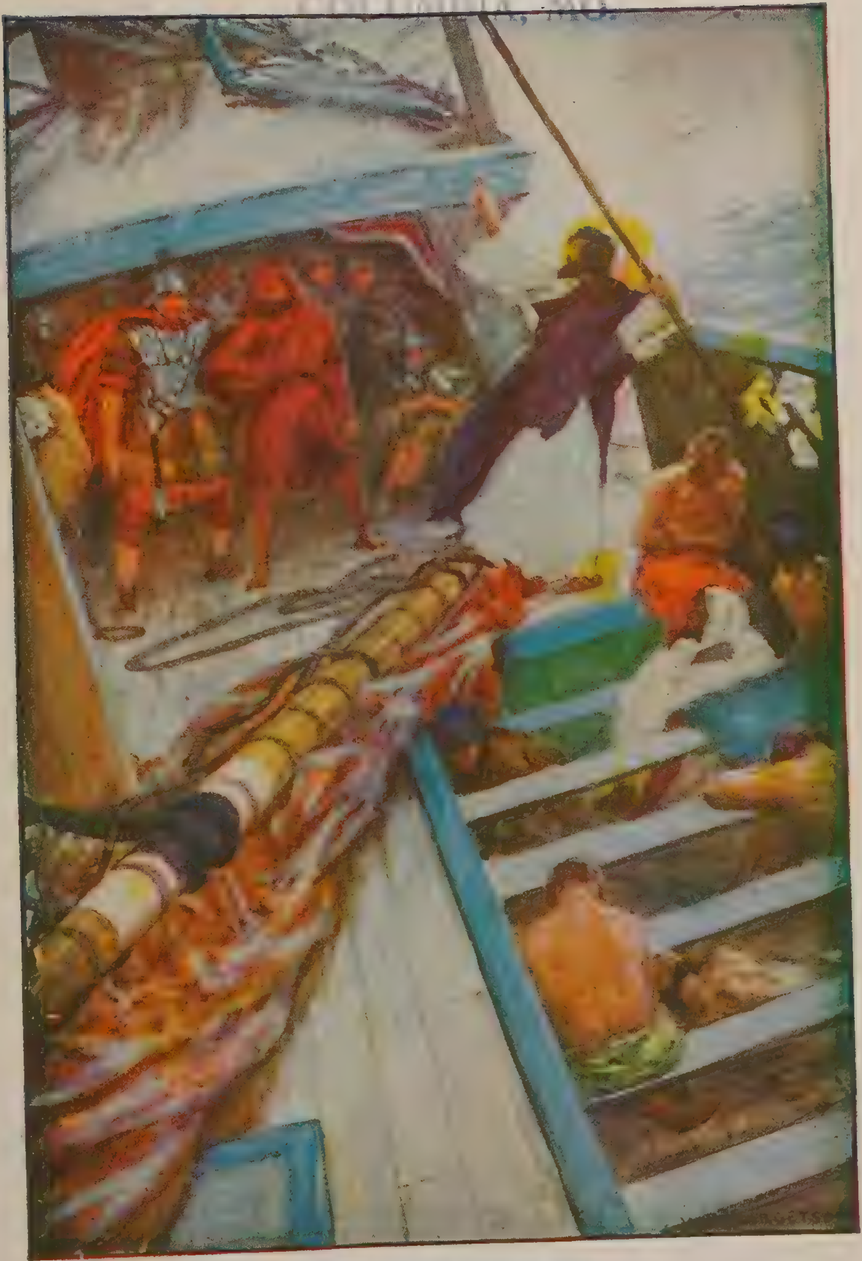
But Pạul said, "We are free citizens of Rōme, and without a trial they have beaten us, and have cast us into prison. And now do they turn us out secretly? No, indeed, let those rulers come themselves and bring us out!"



RŌME.

The officers told these words to the rulers, and when they learned that these men were Rō′man citizens, they were frightened; for their own lives were in danger for having beaten them. They came to Pạul and Sī′las, and begged them to go away from the prison and from the city. Then Pạul and Sī′las walked out of the prison, and went to the house of Ly̆d′ĭ-ȧ. They met the brethren who believed in Jē′şus, and spoke to them words of comfort and of help, and then they went out of the city. In Phĭ′lĭp′pī, from this time there was a church which Pạul loved greatly, and to which in after-times he wrote "The Epistle (or letter) to the Phĭ-lĭp′pĭ-anş."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.



PAUL IN THE STORM AT SEA

Story Eleven

PAUL'S SPEECH ON THE HILL

Acts xvii : 1 to 34.

FROM Phĭ-lĭp′pī, Pa̤ul and Sī′las went to Thĕs-sa-lô-nī′cȧ, which ẇas the largest city in Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ. There they found many Jewş, and a synagogue where the Jewş worshipped. For three weeks Pa̤ul spoke at the meetings in the synagogue, and showed the meaning of the Old Testament writings that the Saviour for whom all the Jewş were looking must suffer, and die, and rise again from the dead. And Pa̤ul said to them:

"This Jē′şus, whom I preach to you, is the Chrīst, the Son of God and the King of Ĭş′ra-el."

Some of the Jewş believed Pa̤ul's teachings, and a far greater number of the Greeks the people of the city who were not Jewş, became followers of Chrīst. And with them were some of the leading women of the city, so that a large church of believers in Chrīst arose in Thĕs-sa-lô-nī′cȧ.

But the Jewş who would not believe in Jē′şus were very angry as they saw so many seeking the Lord. They stirred up a crowd of the lowest people in the city, and raised a riot, and led a noisy throng to the house of a man named Jā′son, with whom they supposed that Pa̤ul and Sī′las were staying. The crowd broke into the house, and sought for Pa̤ul and Sī′las, but could not find them. Then they seized Jā′son, the master of the house, and some other friends of the apostles, and dragged them before the rulers of the city, and cried out:

"These men who have turned the whole world upside down, have come to this city, and Jā′son has taken them into his house. They are acting contrary to the laws of Çæ′şar the emperor, for they say that there is another king, a man whose name is Jē′şus."

The rulers of the city were greatly troubled when they saw these riotous people, and heard their words. They knew that

Jā'son and his friends had done nothing against the law of the land; but to content the crowd they made the believers promise to obey the laws, and then they let them go free. The brethren of the church sent away Pạul and Sī'las, in the night-time, to the city of Bė-rē'ȧ, which was not far from Thĕs'sa-lȯ-nī'cȧ. There again they found a synagogue of the Jewş, and, as in other places, Pạul went into its meetings and preached Jē'şus, not only to the Jewş, but also to the Ġĕn'tīleş, many of whom worshipped with the Jewş.

These people were of a nobler spirit than the Jewş of Thĕs'sa-lȯ-nī'cȧ, for they did not refuse to hear Pạul's teachings. They listened with open minds, and every day they studied the Old Testament writings, to see whether the words spoken by Pạul wer true. And many of them became believers in Jē'şus, not only the Jewş, but the Ġĕn'tīleş also; for those who study the Bible will always find Chrīst in its pages. But the news went to Thĕs'sa-lȯ-nī'cȧ that the word of Chrīst was being taught in Bė-rē'ȧ. The Jewş of Thĕs'sa-lȯ-nī'cȧ sent some men to Bė-rē'ȧ, who stirred up the people against Pạul and Sī'las. To avoid such a riot as had arisen in Thĕs'sa-lȯ-nī'cȧ, the brethren in Bė-rē'ȧ took Pạul away from the city, but Sī'las and Tĭm'o-thy̆ stayed for a time.

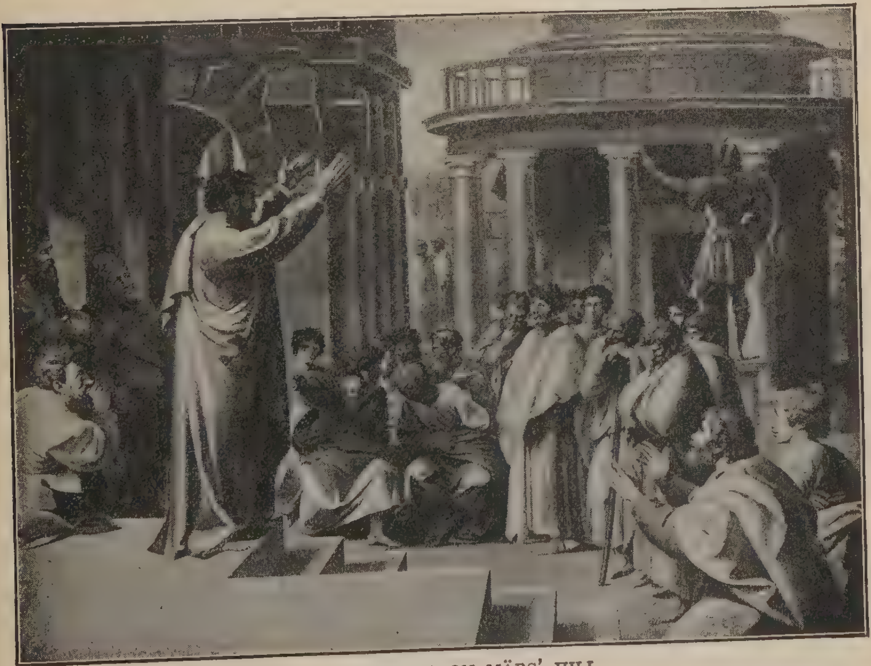
The men who went with Pạul led him down to the sea, and went with him to Ăth'ĕnş. There they left Pạul alone, but took back with them Pạul's message to Sī'las and Tĭm'o-thy̆ to hasten to him as quickly as they could come. While Pạul was waiting for his friends in Ăth'ĕnş, his spirit was stirred in him, as he saw the city full of idols. It was said that in the city of Ăth'ĕnş the images of the gods were more in number than the people. Pạul talked with the Jewş in the synagogue, and in the public square of the city with the people whom he met. For all the people of Ăth'ĕnş, and those who were visiting in that city, spent most of their time in telling or in hearing whatever was new. And there were in Ăth'ĕnş many men who were thought very wise, and who were teachers of what they called wisdom. Some of these men met Pạul, and as they heard him, they said scornfully, "What does this babbler say?"

And because he preached to them of Jē'şus, and of his rising from the dead, some said, "This man seems to be talking about some strange gods!"

There was in Ath'ĕnş a hill, called Märş' Hill, where a court was held upon seats of stone ranged around. They brought Pạul to this place, and asked him, saying, "Mạy we know what is this new teaching that you are giving? You bring to our ears some strange things, and we wish to know what these things mean."

Then Pạul stood in the middle of Märş' Hill, with the people of the city around him, and he said:

"Ye men of Ăth′ĕnş, I see that you are exceedingly given to worship. For as I passed by I saw an altar, upon which was written these words, 'To the Unknown God.' That God whom you know not, and whom you seek to worship, is the God that I make known to you. The God who made the world and all things that are in it, is Lord of heaven and earth, and does not dwell in temples made by the hands of men; nor is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything. For God gives to all men life, and breath, and all things. And he has made of one blood all the peoples who live on the earth: that all men should seek



PẠUL PREACHING ON MÄRŞ' HILL.

God, and should feel after him, and should find him; for he is not far away from any of us. For in him we live, and move, and have our being: even as some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are the children of God.' Since we are God's children, we should not think that God is like gold, or silver, or stone, wrought by the hands of men. Now God calls upon men to turn from their sins; and he tells us that he has fixed a day when he will judge the world through that man Jē′şus Chrīst whom he has chosen, and whom he has raised from the dead."

When they heard Pa̤ul speak of the dead being raised, some laughed in scorn; but others said, "We will hear you again about this." After a time Pa̤ul went away from Ăth′enş. Very few people joined with Pa̤ul, and believed on Jē′şus. Among these few was a man named Dī-ŏ-nȳ̆s′ĭ-us, one of the court that met on Märş' Hill, and a woman named Dăm′a-rĭs. A few others joined with them; but in Ăth′ĕnş the followers of Chrīst were not many.

Story Twelve

PAUL AT CORINTH

Acts xviii : 1 to 22.

PA̤UL went from Ăth′ĕnş to Cŏr′inth, another city in the land of Greeçe. He was alone, for his fellow-workers, Sī′las and Tĭm′o-thy̆, had not yet come from Thĕs-sa-lō-nī′cȧ. But in Cŏr′inth, Pa̤ul met people who soon became his dear friends. They were a man named Ăq′uĭ-lȧ and his wife Prĭs′çil′lȧ, who had lately come from Rōme to Cŏr′inth. Every Jew in those times was taught some trade, and Pa̤ul's trade was the weaving of a rough cloth used for making tents. It happened that Ăq′uĭ-lȧ and Prĭs′çil′lȧ were tent-makers also, and so̤ Pa̤ul went to live in their house, and they worked together at making tents.

On the Sabbath-days Pạul went into the synagogue, and there preached the gospel and talked about Chrīst with the Jewş and also with the Greeks who worshipped God in the synagague. Some believed Pạul's words, and some refused to believe, but opposed Pạul, and spoke against him. After a time Sī′las and Tĭm′o-thy̆ came from Thĕs′sa-lô-nī′cȧ to meet Pạul. They brought to him word about the church at Thĕs-sa-lô-nī′cȧ, and some questions that were troubling the believers there. To answer these questions, Pạul wrote from Cŏr′inth two letters, which you can read in the New Testament. They are called "The First Epistle to the Thĕs-sa-lō′-nĭ-anş," and "The Second Epistle to the Thĕs-sa-lo′nĭ-anş." These two letters are the earliest of Pạul's writings that have been kept. We do not know that Pạul wrote any letters to churches earlier than these; but if he did write any, the letters have been lost.

CŎR′INTH.

Now that Sī′las and Tĭm′o-thy̆, as well as Ăq′uĭ-lȧ and Prĭs-çĭl′lȧ, were with Pạul, he was no more alone, and he began to preach even more earnestly than before, telling the Jewş that Jē′şus was the Chrīst of God. When he found that the Jewş would not listen, but spoke evil words against him and against Chrīst, Pạul shook out his garment, as though he were shaking dust from it, and he said to the Jewş, "Your blood shall be upon your own heads, not on me; I am free from sin, for I have given you the gospel, and you will not hear it. From this time I will cease speaking to you, and will go to the Ġĕn′tīleş."

And Pạul went out of the synagogue, and with him went those who believed in Jē′şus. He found a house near to the synagogue belonging to a man named Tī′tus Jŭs′tus, a Ġĕn′tīle who worshipped God, and in that house Pạul preached the gospel to all who came, both Jewş and Ġĕn′tīleş. Many who heard believed in Chrīst, and were baptized; and among them was a Jew named Crĭs′pus, who had been the chief ruler of the synagogue. But most of those who joined the Church of Chrīst in Cŏr′inth were not Jewş, but Ġĕn′tīleş, men and women who turned to God from idols. One night the Lord came to Pạul in a vision, and said to him, "Pạul, do not be afraid; but speak, and do not hold thy peace. I am with thee, and no one shall come against thee to do thee harm; for I have many people in this city."

And Pạul stayed in Cŏr′inth a year and six months, teaching the word of God. After a time the Jewş in a great crowd rushed upon Pạul, and seized him, and brought him into the court before the Rō′man governor of Greeçe, a ruler whose name was Găl′lĭ-ō. They said to the governor, "This man is persuading people to worship God in a way forbidden by the law."

Pạul was just opening his mouth to speak in answer to this charge when Găl′lĭ-ō, the governor, spoke to the Jewş, "O ye Jewş, if this were a matter of wrongdoing or of wickedness, I would listen to you. But if these are questions about words, and names, and your law, look after it yourselves, for I will not be a judge of such things." And Găl′lĭ-ō drove all the Jewş out of his court. Then some of the Greeks seized Sŏs′the-nēş, who was the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judge's seat in the court-room. But Găl′lĭ-ō did not care for any of these things; for he thought it was a quarrel over small matters.

After staying many days Pạul took leave of the brethren in the church at Cŏr′inth, and sailed away in a ship across the Æ-ġē′an Sea to Ĕph′e-sŭs, which was a great city in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor. With Pạul were his friends Ăq′uĭ-lȧ and Prĭs-çĭl′lȧ. At Ĕph′e-sŭs, Pạul went into the synagogue of the Jewş and talked with them about the gospel and about Chrīst. He could stay only for a little while, although they asked him to remain longer; but he said, "I must go away now; but if it be the will of God, I will come again to you."

And he set sail from Ĕph′e-sŭs, but left Ăq′uĭ-lȧ and Prĭs-çĭl′lȧ there until he should return. Pạul sailed over the Great Sea to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, in the land of Jū-dē′ȧ. At that place he landed, and from thence went up to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm, and visited the mother-church. Then he journeyed back to Ăn′tĭ-ŏch, the city from which he had set forth.

And this was the end of Pạul's second journey among the Ġĕn′tīleş preaching the gospel.

Story Thirteen

PAUL AT EPHESUS

Acts xviii : 23, to xx : 1.

THE apostle Pa̤ul did not stay long at Ăn′tĭ-ŏch, but soon started out for another journey among the churches already formed and into new fields. He went through Sy̆r′ĭ-ȧ, the country around Ăn′tĭ-ŏch, and then to the region near Tär′sus, which had been his early home, everywhere preaching Chrīst. He crossed over the mountains and entered into the heart of Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, coming to the land of Gȧ-lā′tiȧ. The people in this land were a warm-hearted race, eager to see and to hear new things. They listened to Pa̤ul with great joy, and believed at once in his teachings. Pa̤ul wrote afterward that they received him as an angel of God, as though he were Jē′şus Chrīst himself, and that they were ready to pluck out their own eyes and give them to him, so eager were they to have the gospel.

But soon after Pa̤ul went away some Jew′ĭsh teachers came, saying to these new believers, "You must all become Jewş, and take upon you the whole Jew′ĭsh law, with all its rules about things to be eaten, and fasts, and feast-days, or you cannot be saved."

And the people in Gȧ-lā′tiȧ turned quickly away from Pa̤ul's words to follow these new teachers; for they were fond of change, and were not firm in their minds. There was danger that all Pa̤ul's work among them would be undone. But as soon as news came to Pa̤ul of their sudden turning from the truth of the gospel he wrote to them a letter, "The Epistle to the Gȧ-lā′tianş." In this letter he called them back to Chrīst, and showed them that they were free, and not slaves to the old law, and urged them to stand fast in the freedom which Chrīst had given them.

Pa̤ul went through Phry̆ġ′ĭ-ȧ, and from that land came again to Ĕph′e-sŭs, which he had visited before, as we read in the last Story. This time he stayed in Ĕph′e-sŭs more than two years, preaching the gospel of Chrīst. At first he spoke in the synagogue of the Jewş, telling the Jewş that Jē′şus was the Anointed Chrīst, the King of Ĭş′ra-el, and proving it from the prophets of the Old Testament. But when the Jewş would no longer listen to him, but spoke evil against the way of Chrīst, Pạul left the synagogue, and spoke every day in a school-room which was opened to him. His work became so well known that almost all the people in Ĕph′e-sŭs, and many in the lands around the city, heard the word of the Lord.

God gave to Pạul at this time great powers of healing. They carried to the sick the cloths with which Pạul had wiped the sweat from his face, and the aprons that he had worn while he was at work making tents, and the diseases left the sick, and evil spirits went out of men. These wonderful works drew great crowds to hear Pạul, and led many more to believe in his words.

There were in that city some Jewş who wandered from place to place, pretending to drive evil spirits out of men. These men saw how great was the power of the name of Jē′şus as spoken by Pạul, and they also began to speak iṇ Jē′şus' name, saying to the evil spirits in men, "I command you to come out, in the name of Jē′şus, whom Pạul preaches."

And the evil spirit in one man answered two of these pretenders, "Jē′şus I know, and Pạul I know; but who are you?"

And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped upon them, and threw them down, and tore off their clothing, and beat them, so that they ran out of the house naked and covered with wounds. Everybody in the city, both Jewş and Greeks, heard of this, and all knew that even the evil spirits feared the name of Jē′şus as spoken by Pạul. And many of those who had dealt with evil spirits came and confessed their deeds and turned to the Lord. And some who had books claiming to tell how to talk with spirits brought them, and burned them as bad books, although the books had cost a great sum of money. Thus the word of the Lord grew in Ĕph′e-sŭs, a great number believed in Chrīst, and a large church arose.

Pạul now began to feel that his work in Ĕph′e-sŭs was nearly finished. He thought that he would go across the Æ-ġē′an Sea, and visit the churches at Phĭ-lĭp′pī and Thĕs-sa-lō-nī′cȧ and Bḗ-rē′ȧ, in the land of Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ, and then the church at Cŏr′inth in Greeçe, and then go once more to Jḗ-rụ′sȧ-lĕm.

"And after I have been there," said Pạul, "then I must also see Rōme."

So to prepare for his coming into Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ he sent Tĭm′o-thȳ, and another friend named Ē-răs′tus, while he himself stayed in Ĕph′e-sŭs for a time longer. But soon after this a great stir arose in that city over Pa̤ul and his preaching.

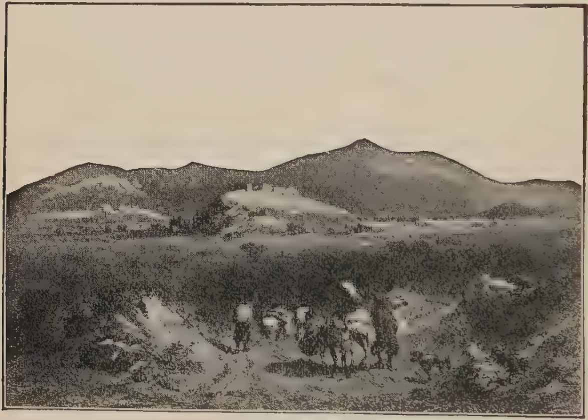
In the city of Ĕph′e-sŭs was standing at that time an idol-temple, one of the greatest and richest in all the world. Around the temple stood a hundred and twenty great columns of white marble, each column the gift of a king. And in it was an image of the goddess Dī-ăn′ȧ, which the people believed had fallen down from the sky. People came from many lands to worship the idol-image of Dī-ăn′ȧ; and many took away with them little images like it, made of gold or silver. The making and selling of these little images gave work to many who wrought in gold and silver, and brought to them great riches.

One of these workers in silver, a man named Dė-mē′trĭ-ŭs, called together his fellow-workmen, and said to them, "You know, my friends, that by this trade we earn our living and win riches. And you can all see and hear that this man Pa̤ul has persuaded and turned away many people, not only in this city, but also throughout all these lands, by telling all men that there are no gods which are made by hands. There is danger that our trade will come to an end, and danger, too, that the temple of the great goddess Dī-ăn′ȧ may be made of no account. It may be even that the goddess whom all Ā′şia and all the world worships shall fall down from her greatness." When the workmen heard this they became very angry, and they set up a great cry, shouting out, "Great is Dī-ăn′ȧ of the Ē-phē′şianş! Great is Dī-ăn′ȧ of the Ē-phē′şianş!"

And soon the whole city was in an uproar; people were running through the streets and shouting, and a great multitude was drawn together, most of them not knowing what had caused the crowd and the noise. In the side of the hill near the city was a great open place hollowed out, having stone seats around it on three sides. It was used for public meetings, and was called "the theatre." Into this place all the people rushed, until it was thronged; while Dė-mē′trĭ-ŭs and his fellow-workers led on the shouting, "Great is Dī-ăn′ȧ of the Ē-phē′şianş!"

They seized two of Pa̤ul's friends who were with him in the city, Gā′ius and Ăr-ĭs-tär′chus, and dragged them with them into the theatre. Pa̤ul wished to go in, and try to speak to the people, but the disciples of Chrīst would not let him go; and some of the chief men of the land, who were Pa̤ul's friends, sent word to him, urging and beseeching him not to venture into the theatre.

The noise, and the shouting, and the confusion were kept up for two hours. When the throng began to grow tired, and were ready to listen, the clerk of the city came forward, and quieted the people, and said, "Ye men of Ĕph′e-sŭs, what is the need of all this riot? Is there any one who does not know that this city guards the temple of the great goddess Dī-an′ȧ, and of the image that fell down from the heavens? Since these things cannot be denied, you should be quiet, and do nothing rash or foolish. You have brought here these men, who are not robbers of temples, nor have they spoken evil against our goddess. If Dė-mē′trĭ-ŭs and the men of his trade have a charge to bring against any men, the courts are open, and there are judges to hear their case. But if there is any other business, it must be done in a regular meeting of the people. For we are in danger for this day's riot, and may be brought to account for it, since there is no cause for it, and no reason that we can give for this gathering of a crowd."


ĔPH′E-SŬS.

And after the city clerk had quieted the people with these words he sent them away. When the riot was over, and all was peaceful again, Pa̤ul met the disciples of Chrīst and spoke to them once more. He had been in Ĕph′e-sŭs for three years preaching; and while there he had written, besides the epistle or letter to the Gȧ-lā′tianş, that to the Rō′manş, and two letters to the Cȯ-rĭnth′ĭ-anş, the believers in Chrīst at Cŏr′inth in Greeçe. He now sailed away from Ĕph′e-sŭs, across the Æ-ġē′an Sea to Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ, where he had preached the gospel before on his second journey.

Story Fourteen

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Acts xx : 2, to xxi : 16.

AFTER his three years at Ĕph′e-sŭs in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, Pạul sailed across the Æ-ġē′an Sea to Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ. There he visited again the churches in Phĭ-lĭp′pī, Thĕs-sa-lô-nī′cȧ and Bė-rē′ȧ. Then he went southward into Greeçe, and saw again the church at Cŏr′inth, to which shortly before he had written two long letters. While Pạul was visiting these churches he told them of the believers in Chrīst among the Jewş in Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and Jū-dē′ȧ; that many of these were very poor, and since they had become disciples of Chrīst the other Jewş would not help them. Therefore Pạul asked the Ġĕn′tīle churches everywhere to send gifts to these poor people. He said in his letters:

"These people have sent the word of Chrīst to you; now send to them your gifts to show that you love them, and to show that you thank God for the gift of his Son who saves you from your sins."

From each of the churches men were chosen to go with Pạul to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm and to carry these gifts. From Bė-rē′ȧ, the place where so many had studied the Scriptures, as we read in Story Eleven, went a man named Sŏp′a-tĕr. From Thĕs-sa-lô-nī′cȧ went Ăr-ĭs-tär′chus and Sĕ-cŭn′dus. From Dĕr′bė in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, Gā′ius and Tĭm′o-thy̆ were sent; and from the other churches in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor, Ty̆ch′ĭ-cŭs and Trŏph′ĭ-mŭs. All these went on before, and waited for Pạul at Trō′ăs, on the shore of the Æ-ġē′an Sea. Pạul's friend Lụke the doctor joined him again at Phĭ-lĭp′pī, and they sailed together to Trō′ăs. There the other disciples met them, and they stayed for a week.

On the evening of the first day of the week, a farewell meeting was held at Trō′ăs, for Pạul and his party, who on the next day were to start on their journey to Jė-rụ′sȧ-lĕm. The meeting was in a large upper room on the third story of a house, and it was filled with people who had come to hear Pa̤ul. While Pa̤ul was speaking, one young man, named Eū'tȳ-chus, who was sitting in a window, dropped asleep, and in his sleep fell out of the window upon the ground, two stories below. He was taken up dead; but Pa̤ul went down, and fell on him, and placed his arms around him, saying, "Do not weep for him, for his life is still in him."

Then Pa̤ul went up again, and broke the bread with the believers, and held with them the Lord's Supper; and then he talked again for a long time, even until the break of day. And they brought the young man living, at which they were very happy.

All the rest of the party going to Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm, except Pa̤ul, went on board the ship at Trō'ăs. But as the ship was to stop on the way at a place called Ăs'sŏs, Pa̤ul chose to go to that place on foot. At Ăs'sŏs, they took Pa̤ul on board, and sailed for some days among the islands of the Æ-ġē'an Sea, and stopped at Mī'lē-tus, which was not far from Eph'e-sŭs. Pa̤ul did not wish to go to Ĕph'e-sŭs, but he sent to the elders of the church, asking them to come and meet him at Mī'lē-tus. They came, and Pa̤ul said to them:

"You know from the first day that I set foot in this part of Ā'ṣiȧ, after what manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with a lowly mind, and with tears, and with many troubles which came upon me from the plots of the Jewṣ. You know, too, how faithfully I spoke to you, teaching you in public and from house to house, to rẹpent of your sins, and to believe in our Lord Jē'ṣus Chrīst.

"And now, bound in my spirit, I am going to Jė-ru̥'sȧ-lĕm, not knowing what shall c̣ome upon me there, except that the Holy Spirit tells me in every place that chains and troubles will meet me. But I do not hold my life of any account, as dear to me; so that I may run out my race in Chrīst, and may do the work given me by the Lord Jē'ṣus, to preach the good news of God's grace. And now, I know that you all, among whom I went preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more.

"Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock which the Holy Spirit has placed in your care, as shepherds to feed the church, which the Lord Jē'ṣus bought with his own blood. I know that after I go away, enemies, like savage wolves, shall come among you, not sparing the flock, and also among yourselves men shall rise up speaking false things and leading away disciples after them.

Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease warning you, night and day, with tears.

"And now, I leave you with God, and with the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to make you fit to dwell among his holy ones. I have not sought among you gold, or silver, or fine clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have worked for my own living, and to help those who were with me. I have tried to show you by my own life how that you should in the same way help those who are weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jē′şus, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

When Pa̤ul had said this, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. And they all wept, and fell on Pa̤ul's neck, and kissed him; for they felt very sad at his words, that they should see his face no more. They went with him to the ship, and saw him sail away from them.

Pa̤ul and his company sailed among the islands and toward the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, and went ashore at Tȳre. There they found disciples, and stayed with them a week. Some of these spoke to Pa̤ul in the Spirit of God, and told him not to go into Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm. But Pa̤ul had set his face toward that city; and when he found a ship going from Tȳre to Jū-dē′ȧ, all the disciples, with their wives and their children, went with him out of the city; and all knelt down together on the beach and prayed, before they parted from each other. Pa̤ul's party left the ship at a place called Ptŏl-e-mā′is, from which they walked down the shore to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ. This was the place where years before Pē′tẽr had given the gospel to the Rō′man centurion Côr-nē′lĭ-ŭs. And there Pa̤ul found Phĭl′ĭp, the man who had preached to the Sȧ-măr′ĭ-tanş and to the nobleman from Ē-thĭ-ō′pĭ-ȧ. In those old days, Pa̤ul then Sa̤ul, had been Phĭl′ĭp's enemy, and had driven him out of Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm. Now they met as friends, and Pa̤ul stayed as a guest at Phĭl′ĭp's house.

While they were at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, an old man, named Ăg′a-bŭs, came down from Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm. He was a prophet, to whom God had shown some things that were to come to pass. We have read of a prophecy by this man before. This man came to Pa̤ul, and took off Pa̤ul's girdle, and with it bound his own feet and hands, and he said:

"Thus saith the Spirit of God, 'So shall the Jewş at Jė-ru̩′sȧ-lĕm bind the man that owns this girdle, and shall give him into the hands of the Ġĕn′tīleş.'"

When they heard this, all Pa̤ul's friends, and Phĭl′ĭp, and the disciples of Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, pleaded with Pa̤ul and begged him not to go up to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. But Pa̤ul answered:

"What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm for the name of the Lord Jē′şus!"

When they saw that Pa̤ul could not be moved from his purpose, they ceased trying to persuade him, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

After some days in Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, Pa̤ul and his friends, with some of the believers from Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, went up the mountains to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm. So Pa̤ul was once more, and now for the last time, in the city of his people.

Story Fifteen

THE SPEECH ON THE STAIRS

Acts xxi : 17, to xxii : 29.

WHEN Pa̤ul and his friends came to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, they met with the church in that city, and gave the money which had been gathered among the Ġĕn′tīleş to help those of the Jew′ĭsh believers in Chrīst who were poor. The Apostle Jāmeş, the Lord's brother, who was at the head of the church in Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, gave to Pa̤ul and his friends a glad welcome, and praised God for the good work wrought among the Ġĕn′tīleş.

About a week after Pa̤ul had come to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, he was worshipping in the Temple, when some Jewş from the lands around

Ĕph′e-sŭs saw him. They at once stirred up a crowd, and took hold of Pa̤ul, crying out:

"Men of Ĭş′ra-el, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people, and against our law, and against this Temple. Besides, he has brought Ġĕn′tīleş into the Temple, and thus has made the holy house unclean!"

They had seen with Pa̤ul, walking in the city, one of his friends from Ĕph′e-sŭs who was not a Jew, and they started the false report that Pa̤ul had taken him into the Temple. When the Jewş set up this cry against Pa̤ul, all the city was stirred up, and a great crowd gathered around Pa̤ul. They dragged Pa̤ul out of the Temple into the outer court, and were about to kill him, in their rage.

But in the castle on the north of the Temple was a Rō′man guard of soldiers, a thousand men under the command of an officer, whom we should call a colonel, but whom they called "the chief captain." Word came to this officer that all Jê-ru̧′sā-lĕm was in a riot, and that a wild mob had seized the Temple. He called out companies of soldiers and their centurions, or captains, and rushed quickly into the Temple and into the midst of the crowd who were beating and trampling upon Pa̤ul. The chief captain took Pa̤ul from their hands, and, thinking that he must have done something very wicked to call forth such a riot, ordered him to be fastened with two chains.

Then he asked who this man was and what he had done. All began to answer at once, some shouting one thing and some another, and as the chief captain could understand nothing in the confusion, he commanded the soldiers to take him into the castle. The crowd made a rush to seize Pa̤ul and take him away from the soldiers, but they carried him through the throng and up the stone steps that led into the castle, while all around, at the foot of the stairs, was the multitude of angry Jewş, crying out, "Away with him! Kill him!"

Just as they reached the platform at the door of the castle, Pa̤ul, in a quiet manner, spoke to the chief captain in his own language, which was the Greek tongue. He said, "May I say something to you?" The officer was surprised, and he answered Pa̤ul, "Do you know Greek? Are you not that man from Ē′ġy̆pt who some time ago rose up against the rulers, and let out into the wilderness four thousand men who were murderers?"

But Pa̤ul said, "I am a Jew, of Tär′sus in Çĭ-lĭ′çiȧ. I belong to no mean city. I pray you, give me leave to speak to the people."

The chief captain thought that if this man should speak to the people, he might learn something about him, so he gave him leave. Then Pa̤ul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with his hand to the crowd to show that he wished to speak. Soon everybody became quiet, for all wanted to hear; and then Pa̤ul began to speak to the people. But he did not speak in Greek, as he had spoken to the chief captain. He spoke in the Hē′brew tongue, their own language, which they loved to hear. And when they heard him speak in Hē′brew, their own tongue, they were all the more ready to listen to him. And this was what Pa̤ul said:

"Brethren and fathers, hear the words that I speak to you. I am a Jew, born in Tär′sus, of Çĭ-lĭ′çiȧ, but brought up in this city at the feet of the wise teacher Gȧ-mā′lĭ-el, and taught in a strict way in the law of our fathers; and I was earnest for God, as all of you are this day. And I was a bitter enemy of the way of Chrīst, binding and putting in prison both men and women who believed in Jē′ṣus. The high-priest himself knows this, and all the council of the elders; for they gave me letters to our people in Dȧ-măs′cus. And I went on a journey to that place to bring in chains from Dȧ-măs′cus to Jḗ-ru̇′sȧ-lĕm those who followed Jē′ṣus, to punish them.

"And it came to pass as I made my journey and drew nigh to Dȧ-măs′cus, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to me, 'Sa̤ul, Sa̤ul, why art thou fighting against me and doing me harm?' And I answered, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And he said to me, 'I am Jē′ṣus of Năz′a-rĕth, whom you are trying to destroy!'

"Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the voice that spoke to me. And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Rise up, and go into Dȧ-măs′cus, and it shall be told thee what things are given to thee to do.'

"When I stood up I could not see, from the glory of that light, and I was led by the hands of those who were with me into Dȧ-măs′cus. And a man named Ăn-a-nī′as, a man who worshipped God and kept the law, of whom all the Jewṣ in the city spoke well, came to me, and standing by me, said, 'Brother Sa̤ul, receive thy sight.'

"And in that very hour I looked up and saw him. And he said to me, 'The God of our fathers hath chosen thee to know his will, and to see the Holy One, and to hear his voice. For thou shalt speak in his name to all men, telling them what thou hast seen and heard.'

"And afterward, when I came back to Jė-ru̥'sā-lĕm, and was praying in the Temple, I saw the Lord again, and he spoke to me, 'Go forth, and I will send thee far hence to the Ġĕn'tīleş.'"

The Jewş listened to Pa̤ul quietly until he spoke that word "Ġĕn'tīleş," which roused up all their wrath. They began to cry out, 'Away with such a fellow from the earth! It is not fit that he should live!"

And as they flung off their garments, and threw dust into the air in their rage, the chief captain ordered that Pa̤ul should be taken into the castle and beaten with rods until he should tell what dreadful thing he had done to arouse such anger. For the chief captain, not knowing the Jewş' language, had not understood what Pa̤ul had said.

They took Pa̤ul into the castle, and were tying him up to beat him, when Pa̤ul said to the centurion who stood by, "Have you any right to beat a Rō'man citizen who has not been tried before a judge?"

When the centurion heard this he went in haste to the chief captain, and said to him, "Take care what you do to that man, for he is a Rō'man citizen!"

Then the chief captain came and said to Pa̤ul, "Tell me, are you a Rō'man citizen?"

And Pa̤ul answered, "Yes, I am."

The chief captain said, "I bought this right to be a citizen with a great sum of money."

And Pa̤ul said to him, "But I am a free-born citizen."

When those who were about to beat Pa̤ul knew that he was a Rō'man citizen, they went away from him in haste, and the chief captain was afraid, because he had bound Pa̤ul, for no one might place a chain on a Rō'man citizen until he had been tried before a Rō'man judge.

They took Pa̤ul into the castle, but were careful not to do him any harm.

Story Sixteen

TWO YEARS IN PRISON

Acts xxii : 30, to xxiv : 27.

AFTER Pa̤ul had been rescued from the Jew′ĭsh mob, he was taken into the castle on the north of the Temple for safekeeping. The chief captain wished to know for what reasons the Jewş were so bitter in their hate against Pa̤ul; and to learn this he commanded the chief priests and rulers to meet together, and brought Pa̤ul down from the castle, and set him before them. Pa̤ul looked earnestly upon the council, and said to them, "Brethren, I have lived with a right feeling toward God all my life until this day."

The high-priest, whose name was Ăn-a-nī′as, was sitting in the council, clad in the white garments worn by all priests. He was so enraged at these words that he said to those who were standing near Pa̤ul, "Strike him on the mouth!"

And Pa̤ul, roused to sudden anger at such unjust words, said in answer, "God shall strike you, O whited wall! Do you sit to judge me by the law, and yet command me to be struck against the law?"

Those that were standing by said to Pa̤ul, "Do you speak such words against the high-priest of God?"

"I did not know," answered Pa̤ul, "that he was high-priest. It is written in the law not to speak evil of a ruler of your people."

Pa̤ul saw that there were two parties in the council, and by a few wise words he made some of the rulers friendly to him, so that they stood up and said, "We find no evil in this man. Perhaps a spirit has spoken to him, or an angel."

This made the rulers on the other side all the more furious, and such a quarrel arose between them that the chief captain feared that Pa̤ul would be torn in pieces, and he again sent down soldiers to take him by force from the council and to bring him into the castle.

On the night after this, while Pa̤ul was in his room in the castle, the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Pa̤ul; for as you have spoken for me at Jė-rų'sȧ-lĕm, so shall you speak for me at Rōme."

Early on the next morning more than forty of the Jewş laid a plan to kill Pạul, and bound themselves together by an oath, swearing that they would neither eat nor drink until they had slain him. These men came to the chief priests, and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will taste nothing until we have killed Pạul. Now, do you ask the chief captain to bring Pạul down again to meet the council, so that they may hear him, and try his case once more. And while he shall be on his way to the council we will rush in and kill him."

Now Pạul had a sister living in Jė-rų'sȧ-lĕm, and her son heard of this plot, and came to the castle, and told it to Pạul. Then Pạul called one of the officers, and said to him, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to tell him."

So the officer brought the young man to the chief captain, and said to him, "Pạul, the prisoner, called me to him, and asked me to bring this young man to you, for he something to say to you."

Then the chief captain took the young man aside, and asked him, "What is it that you have to say to me?"

And he said, "The Jewş have agreed to ask you to bring Pạul before the council again; but do not let him go, for there are more than forty men watching for him, who have sworn an oath together that they will neither eat nor drink until they have killed Pạul."

The chief captain listened carefully, and then sent the young man away, after saying to him, "Do not tell any one that you have spoken of these things to me."

And after the young man had gone the chief captain called to him two centurions, captains over a hundred men, and he said to them, "Make ready two hundred soldiers to go as far as Çæ̆s-a-rē'ȧ, and seventy men on horseback, and two hundred men with spears, at nine o'clock at night."

And he told them also to have ready horses for Pạul, so that he might send him safe to Fē'lĭx, the governor of the land, at Çæ̆s-a-rē'ȧ. And he wrote a letter in this manner:

"Clạu'dĭ-ŭs Lȳ'sĭ-as sends greeting to the most noble governor Fē'lĭx. This man was seized by the Jewş, and would have been killed by them, but I came upon him with the soldiers, and took him from their hands, having learned that he was a citizen of Rōme.

And to find out the reasons why they were so strongly against him, I brought him down to their council. But I found that the charges against him were about questions of their law, but nothing deserving death or bonds. When I heard that there was a plot to kill the man, I sent him at once to you, and told his enemies to go before you with their charges."

So in the night almost five hundred men were sent with a guard for Paṳl. He was brought out of the castle, and taken that night as far as to An-tĭp′a-trĭs, about forty miles. On the next day the soldiers left him, thinking him to be no longer in danger, and returned to Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, while the horsemen rode on with him to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ where the governor Fē′lĭx lived. The officer in charge gave the letter to the governor. He read the letter, and then asked Paṳl from what land he had come. Paṳl told him that he belonged to the land of Çɨ-lĭ′çiȧ in Ā′şiȧ Mī′nor. And Fē′lĭx said, "I will hear your case when those who bring charges against you have come."

A HEATHEN TEMPLE.

And he sent Paṳl to be kept in a castle which had once belonged to Hĕr′od. After five days the high-priest Ăn-a-nī′as and some others came to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, bringing with them a lawyer named Tẽr-tŭl′lus. And when Paṳl was brought before them in presence of Fē′lĭx, the governor, Tẽr-tŭl′lus made a speech charging him with riot and lawbreaking, and many evil deeds. They said also that he was "a ringleader in the party of the Năz′a-rēneş," which was the name they gave to the Church of Chrīst. And the Jewş all joined in the charge, saying that all these things were true. After they had spoken, the governor motioned with his hand toward Paṳl, showing that he might speak, and Pa̤ul, began, "I know that you have been for many years a judge over this people, and for that reason I speak to you willingly. For you may know that it is only twelve days since I went up to worship at Jḗ-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm. Nor was I quarreling with any one in the Temple, nor stirring up a crowd in the Temple, or the synagogues, or in the city. Nor can they prove to you the things that they have said against me.

"But I do own to this, that after the way which they call 'the party of the Năz′a-rēneș,' so do I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things in the law and in the prophets, and having a hope in God that the dead shall be raised up. And I have always tried to keep my heart free from wrong toward God and toward men.

"Now, after many years, I came to bring gifts to my people, and offerings for the altar. And with these they found me in the Temple, but not with a crowd, nor with a riot. But there were certain Jewș from Ā′șia Mī′nor who ought to have been here, if they have anything against me."

Fē′lĭx knew somewhat about the Church of Chrīst, and he said, "When Lȳ′sĭ-as, the chief captain, shall come down, I will settle this case."

And he ordered Pa̤ul to be kept under guard, but that his friends might freely come to see him. After a few days Fē′lĭx and his wife Dru̥-sĭl′lȧ, who was a Jew′ess, sent for Pa̤ul, and heard from him with regard to the gospel of Chrīst. And as Pa̤ul preached to him, of right living, and of ruling one's self, and of the judgment of God that should come upon sinners, Fē′lĭx was alarmed, and said, "Go away for this time; when a fit time comes, and I am ready to listen, I will send for you."

Fē′lĭx was not a just judge, for he hoped that Pa̤ul might give him money, so that he might set Pa̤ul free; and with this in his mind, he șent for Pa̤ul, and talked with him many times. Two whole years passed away, and Pa̤ul was still in prison at Çæs-a-rē′ȧ. At the end of that time Fē′lĭx was called back to Rōme, and a man named Pôr′çĭ-ŭs Fĕs′tus was sent as governor in his place. Fē′lĭx wished to pleașe the Jewș, and he left Pa̤ul a prisoner.

Story Seventeen

THE STORY THAT PAUL TOLD TO THE KING

Acts xxv : 1, to xxvi : 32.

WHEN Fĕs′tus came to rule over the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, in the place of Fē′lĭx, who had kept Pa̤ul in prison so long, he went up to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm to visit that city. There the chief priests and the leading men spoke to him against Pa̤ul, and they asked that he might be sent to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm to be tried. It was their plan to kill Pa̤ul on the way. But Fĕs′tus told them that Pa̤ul should be kept at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, and that he himself would soon go there.

"Let some of your leaders go down with me," said Fĕs′tus, "and bring your charges against him, if you have any."

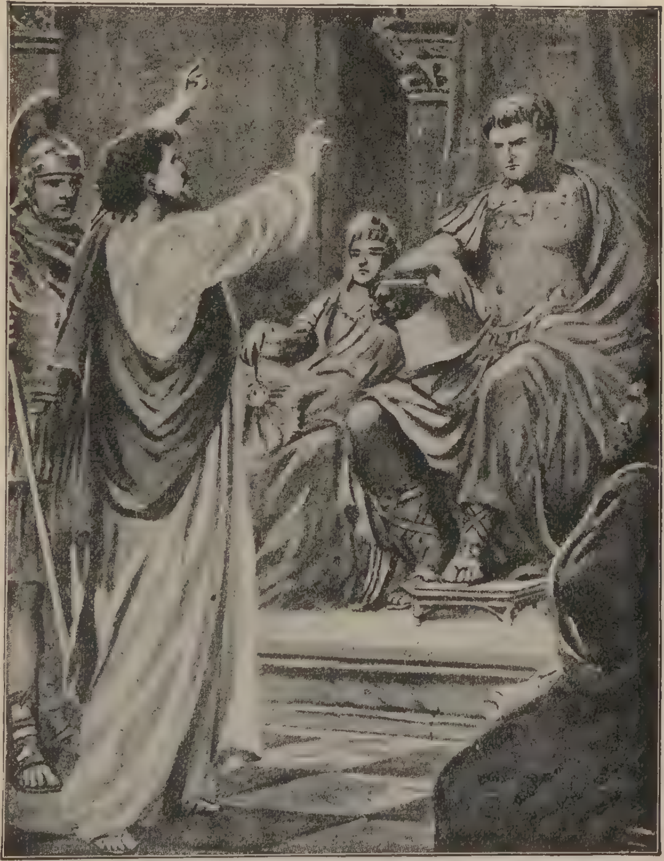
When Fĕs′tus came down to Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ he called them all together, and sat upon the judge's seat, and commanded Pa̤ul to be brought. Then the Jewş said evil things about Pa̤ul, declaring that he had done wickedly. But they could not prove any of the things which they spoke against him. And Pa̤ul said, "I have done no wrong against the law of the Jewş, nor against the Temple, nor against the rule of Çæ′şar the emperor."

Fĕs′tus wished to please the Jewş, for he did not know of their secret purpose to kill Pa̤ul. He said, "Are you willing to go up to Jė-ru̥′sȧ-lĕm, and there be tried upon these charges before me?"

But Pa̤ul said, "I am standing before the Rō′man court where I ought to be judged. I have done no wrong to the Jewş, as thou knowest very well, and no man shall give me into their hands. I ask for a trial before Çæ′şar, the emperor at Rōme."

It was the law throughout the Rō′man lands that any citizen of Rōme, as Pa̤ul was, could ask to be tried at Rōme before Çæ′şar, the emperor. When Fĕs′tus heard Pa̤ul's words, he said, "Do you ask to be tried before Çæ′şar? Then unto Çæ′şar you shall go."

So Pa̤ul was taken back to the prison at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ to be sent to Rōme when his time should come. A few days after this a Jew′ĭsh ruler named Ȧ-grĭp′pȧ, with his sister Bẽr-nī′çė, came to visit Fĕs′tus. He was called "King Ȧ-grĭp′pȧ," and he ruled over a part of the land on the east of the river Jôr′dan. While Ȧ-grĭp′pȧ and Bẽr′nī′çė were at Çæ̆s-a-rē′ȧ, Fĕs′tus said to them, "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Fē′lĭx, of whom the chief priests and elders of the Jewş asked, when I was at Jė-rṳ′sȧ-lĕm, that I should give orders to have him put to death, or given into their hands. I told them that the Rō′manş never give judgment against any man until he stands face to face before his enemies, and can make answer to their charges. When they came down to this place, and the man was brought before them, their charges were not the wicked acts that I expected to hear of; but they had some questions about their ways of worship, and about somebody named



PA̤UL BEFORE Ȧ-GRĬP′PȦ.

Jē'şus, who was dead, but who Pạul said was alive. As I could not understand these questions, I asked Pạul whether he would go up to Jė-rụ'sȧ-lĕm, and there be tried. But Pạul asked for a trial before Çæ'şar, and I am keeping him to be sent to the emperor at Rōme."

"I would like," said Ȧ-grĭp'pȧ, "to hear this man myself."

"To-morrow," said Fĕs'tus, "you shall hear him."

So on the next day, Ȧ-grĭp'pȧ and his sister Bẽr-nī'çė, and Fĕs'tus, with the chief men of the city and the officers of the army, came in great state to the hall of judgment, and Pạul was brought before them, chained to a Rō'man soldier. And after a few words by Fĕs'tus, Ȧ-grĭp'pȧ said to Pạul, "You may now speak for yourself."

Then Pạul spoke in words like these:

"I think myself happy, King Ȧ-grĭp'pȧ, to give answer before thee of all the things charged against me by the Jewş, because I am sure that thou dost know all the Jew'ĭsh ways and the questions about the law. I ask thee, then, to hear me. My way of life from my youth all the Jewş know, for I have lived among them; and if they tell the truth, they would say that I was of those who kept the laws of our people most carefully. And now I stand here to be judged for the sake of the promise which God made to our fathers; that promise to which our twelve tribes, serving God day and night, hope to come. And on account of this hope, O king, the Jewş charge me with doing evil; because I believe that Jē'şus Chrīst rose from the dead to be the King of Ĭş'ra-el. Why should it be something thou canst not believe, that God does raise the dead to life?

"In former times I really thought with myself that I ought to do many things against the name of Jē'şus of Năz'a-rĕth. And this I did in Jė-rụ'sȧ-lĕm; for I shut up many good men and women in prisons, and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. I caused them to be beaten, and I tried to make them curse the name of Jē'şus; and being exceedingly mad against them, I sought for them even in cities far away.

"And as I journeyed to Dȧ-măs'cus with letters from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining around me and those who were with me. And as we all fell down upon the ground, I heard a voice saying to me, 'Sạul, Sạul, why are you fighting against me?'

"And I said, 'Who art thou, Lord?'

"And the Lord said, 'I am Jē′şus, whom you are trying to destroy. But rise up, and stand upon your feet, for I have shown myself to you to make you my servant and my messenger to tell of what you have seen, and of what I will show you. I will keep you safe from the Jew′ĭsh people and from the Ġĕn′tīleş, to whom I send you, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Sā′tan, the evil one, to God, that their sins may be forgiven, and that they may receive a reward among those that are made holy by faith in me.

"O King Ā-grĭp′pȧ, I did not disobey the voice from heaven, but first at Dȧ-măs-cus, and then at Jė-ru′sȧ-lĕm, and throughout all the land of Jū-dē′ȧ, and also among the Ġĕn′tīleş, I have spoken, telling men to turn from sin to God, and to show deeds of right-doing. This is the cause why the Jewş seized me in the Temple and tried to kill me. Having gained help from God, I stand unto this day, speaking to people, small and great, saying only what is given in the law of Mō′şeş and in the prophets: that the Chrīst must suffer and die, and that he by rising from the dead should give light to our people and to the Ġĕn′tīleş."

While Paul was speaking, Fĕs′tus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are mad! Your great learning has turned you to madness!"

For Fĕs′tus, being a Rō′man, knew nothing of Jē′şus or of the truths which Paul spoke.

But Paul said to him, "I am not mad, most noble Fĕs′tus. I speak only sober and truthful words. The king knows of these things, and I speak freely to him. None of these things are hidden from him, for these things were not done in secret. King Ā-grĭp′pȧ, dost thou believe the prophets? I know that thou dost believe."

And Ā-grĭp′pȧ said to Paul, "A little more, and you will persuade me to become a Christian!"

And Paul said, "I would before God, that whether with little or with much, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these chains!"

After these words, King Ā-grĭp′pȧ, and Bẽr′nī′çė, and Fĕs′tus the governor, and those who were there, went away by themselves, and they said to each other, "This man has done nothing deserving death or prison."

And Ā-grĭp′pȧ said to Fĕs′tus, "This man might have been set free if he had not asked to be tried before Çæ′şar."

Story Eighteen

PAUL IN THE STORM

Acts xxvii : 1, to xxviii : 1.

WHEN Pa̤ul chose to be tried before Çæ'şar the emperor which was his right as a Rō'man, it became necessary to send him from Çæ̆s-a-rē'ȧ in Jū-dē'ȧ to Rōme in Ĭt'a-ly̆, where Çæ'şar lived. In those years there were no ships sailing at regular times from city to city, but people who wished to go to places over the sea waited until they could find ships with loads sailing to those places. Pa̤ul and some other prisoners were given into the charge of a Rō'man centurion or captain named Jū'lĭ-ŭs, to be taken to Rōme. Jū'lĭ-ŭs found a ship sailing from Çæ̆s-a-rē'ȧ to places on the shore of Ā'şia Mī'nor, which would take them a part of the way to Rōme. He took Pa̤ul and the other prisoners on board this ship, and with Pa̤ul went his friends, Lu̥ke the doctor and Ăr-ĭs-tär'chus from Thĕs-sa-lō̇-nī'cȧ. Perhaps Tĭm'o-thy̆ also was with them, but of this we are not certain.

They set sail from Çæ̆s-a-rē'ȧ, after Pa̤ul had been in prison more than two years; and they followed the coast northward to Sī'dŏn. There they stopped for a day; and Jū'lĭ-ŭs the centurion was very kind to Pa̤ul, and let him go ashore to see his friends who were living there. From Sī'dŏn they turned to the northwest, and sailed past the island of Çȳ'prus, and then westward by the shore of Ā'şia Mī'nor. At a city called Mȳ'rȧ they left the ship, and went on board another ship, which was sailing from Ăl-ĕx̧-ăn'drĭ-ȧ to Ĭt'a-ly̆ with a load of wheat from the fields of Ē'ġy̆pt.

Soon a heavy wind began to blow against the ship, and it sailed very slowly for many days; but at last came to the large island of Crēte, and followed its southern shore in the face of the wind until they found a harbor, and they stayed for a few days. But this harbor was not a good one, and they thought to leave it and sail to another.

Pa̤ul now said to them, "Sirs, I see that this voyage will be with great loss to the load and the ship, and with great danger to the lives of us all."

And he urged them to stay where they were at anchor. But the owner of the ship and its captain thought that they might sail in safety; and Jū′lĭ-ŭs the centurion listened to them rather than to Pa̤ul. So when a gentle south wind began to blow, they set sail once more, closely following the shore of the island of Crēte. But soon the wind grew into a great storm, and the ship could not face it, and was driven out of its course. Behind the ship was a little boat, and this they drew up on board; and as the ship creaked and seemed in danger of going to pieces, they tied ropes around it to hold it together.

The storm grew and drove the ship away from the island into the open sea. To make the vessel lighter they threw overboard a part of the load; and the next day they cast into the sea all the loose ropes and everything on the ship that could be spared.

Day after day went on, with no sight of the sun, and night after night with no sight of the stars. The great waves rolled over the ship and beat upon it, until those on board hardly hoped to save their lives. In their fear, for days the men and the prisoners had eaten nothing. But in the midst of the storm, Pa̤ul stood up among them, and said:

"Sirs, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crēte, for then we might have been saved much harm and loss. But even as it is, be of good cheer; for though the ship will be lost, all of us on board shall be saved. This night there stood by me an angel of the Lord, to whom I belong, and whom I serve, and the angel said to me, 'Fear not, Pa̤ul; you shall yet stand before Çæ′şar; and God has given to you all those who are sailing with you.'

"Now, friends, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as the angel said to me. But we must cast upon some island."

When the storm had lasted fourteen days, at night the sailors thought that they were coming near to land. They dropped down the line and found that the water was twenty fathoms deep; then after a little they let down the line again and found the water only fifteen fathoms deep. They were sure now that land was near, but they were afraid that the ship might be driven upon rocks; so they threw out from the stern or rear-end four anchors to hold the ship; and then they longed for the day to come.

The sailors let down the little boat, saying that they would throw out some more anchors from the bow, or front of the ship, but really intending to row away in the boat and leave the ship and all on board to be destroyed. But Pa̤ul saw their purpose, and he said to the centurion, "Unless these sailors stay in the ship none of us can be saved."

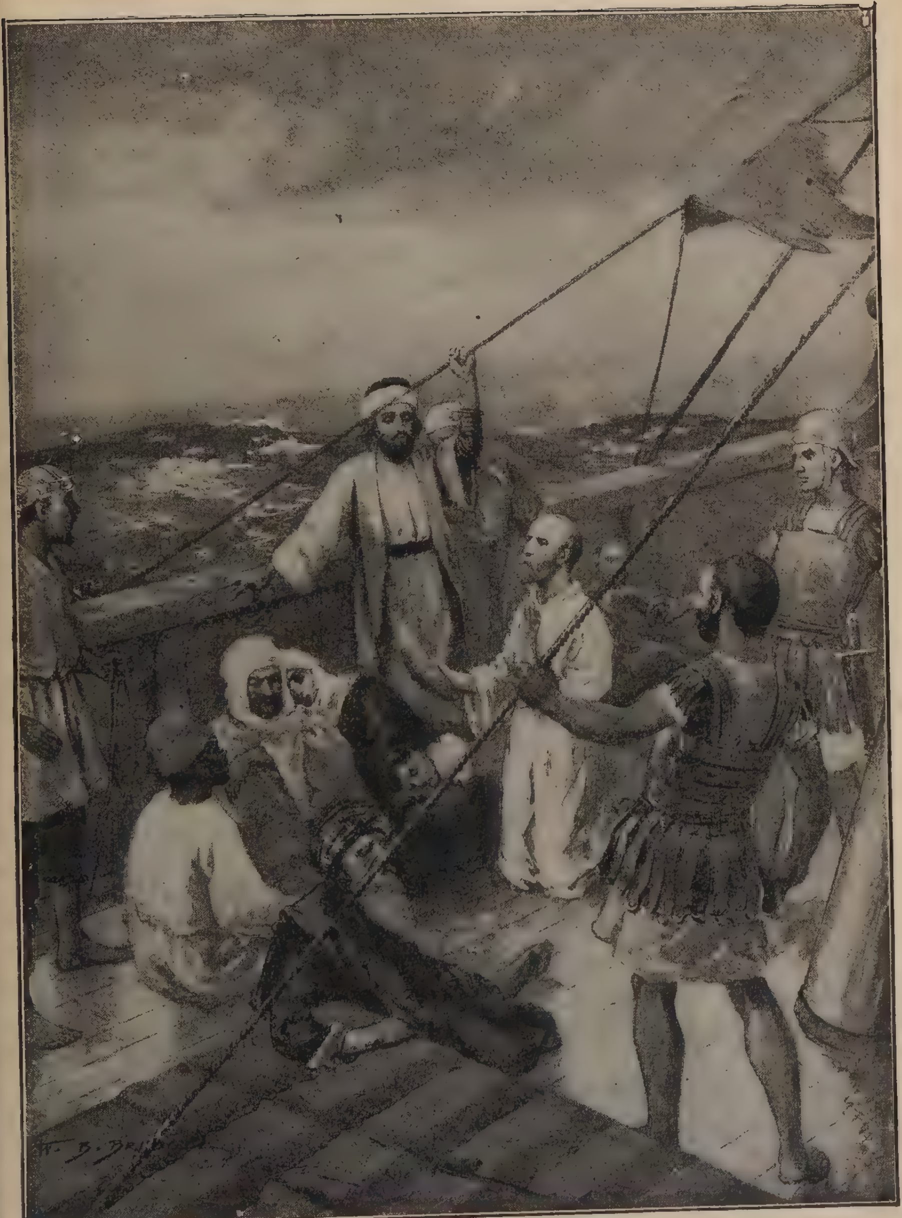
Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat, and let it fall off, so that the sailors could not get away. And as it drew toward daylight, Pa̤ul urged them all to take some food. He said:

"This is the fourteenth day that you have waited without any food. Now I beg of you to eat, for you need it to keep your lives safely. You will all be saved; not an hair shall fall from the head of one of you."

He took some bread and gave thanks to God before them all; then he broke it and began to eat. This encouraged all the others, so that they too took food. There were in all on board the ship, sailors, and soldiers, and prisoners, and others, two hundred and seventy-six people. After they had eaten enough they threw out into the sea what was left of its load of wheat, so that the ship might be less heavy upon the waves, and might go nearer to the shore.

As soon as the day dawned, they could see land, but did not know what land it was. They saw a bay with a beach, into which they thought that they might run the ship. So they cut loose the anchors, leaving them in the sea, and they hoisted up the fore-sail to the wind, and made toward the shore. The ship ran aground, and the front end was stuck fast in the sand, but the rear part began to break in pieces from the beating of the waves.

Now came another danger, just as they were beginning to hope for their lives. By the Rō′man law, a soldier who had charge of a prisoner must take his prisoner's place if he escaped from his care. These soldiers feared that their prisoners might swim ashore and get free. So they asked the centurion to let them kill all the prisoners, while they were still on board the ship. But Jū′lĭ-ŭs the centurion loved Pa̤ul, and to save Pa̤ul's life, kept them from killing the prisoners. He commanded that those who could swim should leap overboard and get first to the land. Then the rest



THE APOSTLE PAUL IN THE STORM.

went ashore, some on planks, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And all came safe to the shore, not one life being lost.

And then they found that they were on the island of Mĕl′ĭ-tȧ, which is in the Great Sea, south of the larger island of Sĭç′ĭ-ly̆.

Story Nineteen

HOW PAUL CAME TO ROME AND HOW HE LIVED THERE

Acts xxviii : 2 to 31.

THE people who lived on the island of Mĕl′ĭ-tȧ were very kind to the strangers who had been thrown by the sea upon their shore. It was cold and rainy, and the men from the ship were in garments drenched by the waves. But the people made a fire, and brought them all around it, and gave them good care. Very soon they found that many of the men were prisoners, who were under guard of the soldiers.

Pa̤ul gathered a bundle of sticks and placed them on the fire, when suddenly a poisonous snake came from the pile, driven out by the heat, and seized Pa̤ul's hand with its teeth. When the people saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer. He has saved his life from the sea, but the just gods will not let him live on account of his wickedness."

But Pa̤ul shook off the snake into the fire, and took no harm. They looked to see his arm swell with poison, and to see him fall down dead suddenly. But when they watched him for a long time and saw no evil come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god, and were ready to worship him.

Near the place where the ship was wrecked were lands and buildings belonging to the ruler of the island, whose name was Pŭb′lĭ-us. He took Pa̤ul and his friends into his house and treated them very kindly. The father of Pŭb′lĭ-us was very ill with a fever and a disease called dysentery, from which people often died. But Pa̤ul went into his room, and prayed by his side; then he laid his hands on him, and the sick man became well. As soon as the people of the island heard of this, many others troubled with diseases were brought to Pa̤ul, and all were cured. The people of Mĕl′ĭ-tȧ after this gave a great honor to Pa̤ul and those who were with him; and when they sailed away they put on the ship as gifts for them all things that they would need.

The centurion found at anchor by the island a ship from Ăl-ĕx̱-ăn′drĭ-ȧ on its way to Ĭt′a-lȳ̆, which had been waiting there through the winter. The name of this ship was "The Twin Brothers." After three months in the isle, the centurion sent on board this ship his soldiers and prisoners, with Pa̤ul's friends; and they sailed away from Mĕl′ĭ-tȧ. After stopping at a few places on their voyage, they left the ship at Pū-tē′o-lī, in the south of Ĭt′a-lȳ̆, and from that place they were led toward Rōme. The church at Rōme, to which Pa̤ul had written a letter in other days, heard that he was coming, and some of the brethren went out to meet him a few miles from the city. When Pa̤ul saw them, and knew that they were glad to meet him, even though he was in chains, he thanked God, and took heart once more. He had long wished to go to Rōme, and now he came into the city at last, but as a prisoner, chained to a Rō′man soldier.

When they came to Rōme, the good centurion Jū′lĭ-ŭs gave his prisoners to the captain of the guard in the city; but from the kind words spoken by Jū′lĭ-ŭs, Pa̤ul was allowed to go to a house by himself, though with the soldier who guarded him always at his side. After three days in Rōme, Pa̤ul sent for the chief men among the Jews̱ of the city to meet in his house, because he could not go to the synagogue to meet with them. When they came, he said to them:

"Brethren, though I have done no harm to our people, or against our law, yet I was made a prisoner in Jė-ru̧′sā-lĕm, and given into the hands of the Rō′mans̱. When the Rō′mans̱ had given me a trial, they found no cause for putting me to death, and wished to set me free. But the Jewş spoke against me, and I had to ask for a trial before Çæ′şar, though I have no charge to bring against my own people. I have asked to see you and to speak with you, because for the hope of Ĭş′ra-el I am bound with this chain."

They said to Pa̤ul, "No letters have come to us from Jū-dē′ȧ, nor have any of the brethren brought to us any evil report of you. But we would like to hear from you about this people who follow Jē′şus of Năz′a-rĕth, for they are a people everywhere spoken against."

So Pa̤ul named a day, and on the day they came in great number to Pa̤ul's room. He talked with them, explaining the teaching of the Old Testament about Chrīst, from morning until evening. Some believed the words of Pa̤ul, and others refused to believe. And when they would not agree, Pa̤ul said to them as they were leaving, "Truly indeed did the Holy Spirit say of this people, in the words of Ī-şa′iah the prophet, 'Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and yet not see. For this people's heart is become hard, and their ears are dull, and their eyes they have shut; for they are not willing to see, nor to hear, nor to understand, nor to turn from their sins to God.' But know this, that the salvation of Chrīst is sent to the Ġĕn′tīleş; and they will listen to it, even though you do not."

And after this Pa̤ul lived two years in the house which he had hired. Every day a soldier was brought from the camp, and Pa̤ul was chained to him for all that day. And the next day another soldier came; each day a new soldier was chained to Pa̤ul. And to each one Pa̤ul spoke the gospel, until after a time many of the soldiers in the camp were believers in Chrīst; and when these soldiers were sent away they often carried the gospel with them to other lands. So Pa̤ul, though a prisoner, was still doing good and working for Chrīst.

Then, too, some of Pa̤ul's friends were with him in Rōme. The young Tĭm′o-thy̆, whom Pa̤ul loved to call his son in the gospel, and Lu̥ke the doctor, of whom he wrote as "the beloved physician," were there, perhaps in the same house. Ăr-ĭs-tär′chus of Thĕs-sa-lō-nī′cȧ, who had been with him in the ship and in the storm, was still with Pa̤ul. Märk, the young man who years before went with Pa̤ul and Bär′na-băs on their first journey from Ăn′tĭ-ŏch, visited Pa̤ul in Rōme.

At one time, when Pa̤ul had been a prisoner nearly two years, a friend came to see him from Phĭ-lĭp′pī in Măç-e-dō′nĭ-ȧ. His name was Ē-păph-ro-dī′tus, and he brought to Pa̤ul a loving message from that church, and also gifts to help Pa̤ul in his need. In return, Pa̤ul wrote to the church at Phĭ-lĭp′pī a letter, "The Epistle to the Phĭ-lĭp′pĭ-anş," full of tender and gentle words. It was taken to the church by Ē-păph-ro-dī′tus and by Tĭm′o-thȳ, whom Pa̤ul sent with him, perhaps because in Rōme Ē-păph-ro-dī′tus was very ill, and Pa̤ul may have thought it better not to have him go home alone.

In Rōme a man named Ō-nĕs′ĭ-mŭs met Pa̤ul. He was a runaway slave who belonged to a friend of Pa̤ul, named Phī-lē′mon, living at Cō-lŏs′sē in Ā-şiȧ Mī′nor, not far from Ĕph′e-sŭs. Pa̤ul led Ō-nĕs′ĭ-mŭs to give his heart to Chrīst, and then, although he would have liked to keep him with himself, he sent him back to Phī-lē′mon, his master. But he asked Phī-lē′mon to take him, no longer as a slave, but as a brother in Chrīst. This he wrote in a letter which he sent by Ō-nĕs′ĭ-mŭs, called "The Epistle to Phī-lē′mon." Ō-nĕs′ĭ-mŭs carried at the same time another letter to the church at Cō-lŏs′sē. This letter is "The Epistle to the Cō-lŏs′sĭ-anş." And about the same time Pa̤ul wrote one of the greatest and most wonderful of all his letters, "The Epistle to the Ē-phē′şianş," which he sent to the church in Ĕph′e-sŭs. So all the world has been richer ever since Pa̤ul's time by having the four letters which he wrote while he was a prisoner at Rōme.

It is thought, though it is not certain, that Pa̤ul was set free from prison after two years; that he lived a free man, preaching in many lands for a few years; that he wrote during those years the First Epistle to Tĭm′o-thȳ, whom he had sent to care for the church at Ĕph′e-sŭs, and the Epistle to Tī′tus, who was over the churches in the island of Crēte; that he was again made a prisoner and taken to Rōme; and from his Rō′man prison wrote his last letter, the Second Epistle to Tĭm′o-thȳ, and that soon after this the wicked Emperor Nē′rō caused him to be put to death. Among his last words in the letter to Tĭm′o-thȳ were these:

"I have fought a good fight; I have run my race; I have kept the faith; and now there is waiting for me the crown which the Lord himself shall give me."

Story Twenty

THE THRONE OF GOD

Revelation i : 9 to 20; iv : 1, to v : 14.

YOU remember the apostle Jŏhn, "the disciple whom Jē′şus loved." When Jŏhn was an old man, he was made a prisoner by a cruel emperor of Rōme, and was kept in a little island called "the isle of Păt′mos," which is in the Æ-ġē′an Sea, not far from Ĕph′e-sŭs. While Jŏhn was shut up on this island the Lord Jē′şus Chrīst came to him, and showed him some things which were to come to pass.

It was on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, when suddenly Jŏhn heard behind him a loud voice, as loud as the sound of a trumpet. He turned to see from whom the voice came; and then he saw seven golden candlesticks standing, and among them One whom Jŏhn knew at once as his Lord, Jē′şus Chrīst. Yet Chrīst, as he saw him, was far more glorious than he had been while living as a man on the earth. He was dressed in a long white garment, with a girdle of gold over his breast; his hair and his face were so shining that they seemed as white as snow; his eyes flashed like fire; his feet were like polished brass, glowing as a furnace; and his voice sounded like the rushing of a mighty torrent of waters. In his right hand were held seven stars; and a glory came from him brighter than the sun.

When Jŏhn saw his Lord in all this splendor he fell at his feet in great terror. Then he felt the right hand of Chrīst laid upon him; and he heard his voice, saying:

"Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living One. I was dead, and now I am alive for evermore. Write the things which you have seen, and other things which I will show you, and send them to the seven churches in Ā′şiȧ. The seven stars which you see in my hand are the ministers of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks standing around me are the seven churches."

Then the Lord gave to Jŏhn the words of a letter which he commanded Jŏhn to write to the seven churches in that part of Ā′şiȧ, of which churches that at Ĕph′e-sŭs was the first. To each church was to be sent a different letter, the word of the Lord Jē′şus to that church, praising it for some things, and rebuking it for others. When these words had been given to the churches, Jŏhn saw a door opened in heaven; and he heard a voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying to him, "Come up to this place, and I will show thee things that shall come to pass."

Then at once Jŏhn was taken up to heaven, and he saw the throne of God, and One sitting upon it whom he could scarcely see for the dazzling glory around him. And over the throne was a rainbow of many colors. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and upon them sat twenty-four old men, the elders of the church, dressed in white, with crowns of gold on their heads. Out of the throne came lightning, and thunder, and the sound of voices. Before the throne was a sea of glass like crystal, and beside the throne were four strange living creatures, each having six wings. And these living ones were saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come."

And then the elders would fall down and worship him who sits on the throne, and lay their crowns at his feet, and say, "Thou art worthy, O God, our Lord, to have the honor, and the glory, and the power; for thou didst create and make all things."

Then Jŏhn saw in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne a book, in the form of a roll, written on both sides, and sealed with seven seals. And a mighty angel called out with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose its seals?"

And no one in all the heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book or to loosen its seals. Then Jŏhn began to weep, because there was found no one worthy to open the book or even to look upon it. But one of the twenty-four elders spoke to Jŏhn, saying, "Weep not; see, the Lion of the tribe of Jū′dah, he who came from Dā′vid, has won the right to open the book and its seven seals."

Then before the throne, and among the elders and the four living creatures, Jŏhn saw standing the Lamb of God, Jē′şus Chrīst, with the wounds of the cross upon him. in hands, and feet, and side. He came and took the book from the right hand of the One who was sitting on the throne. And as he took the book the four living creatures, and the twenty-four elders, all fell down before the throne. Each held a harp and a golden bowl full of incense, such as was used in the Temple, as a sign of the prayers of God's people. And they all sang a new song, with the words:

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to have the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Story Twenty-one

THE CITY OF GOD

Revelations vii : 9 to 17 : xxi : 1 to 27 : xxii : 1 to 17.

AGAIN Jŏhn saw the throne of God, and before it, and before the Lamb of God, stood a multitude of people so great that no man could count them. They were dressed in white robes, and branches of palm were in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, "Salvation unto our God upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

And all the angels were standing around the throne, and around the four living creatures, and around the seats of the twenty-four elders; and the angels fell down on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever."

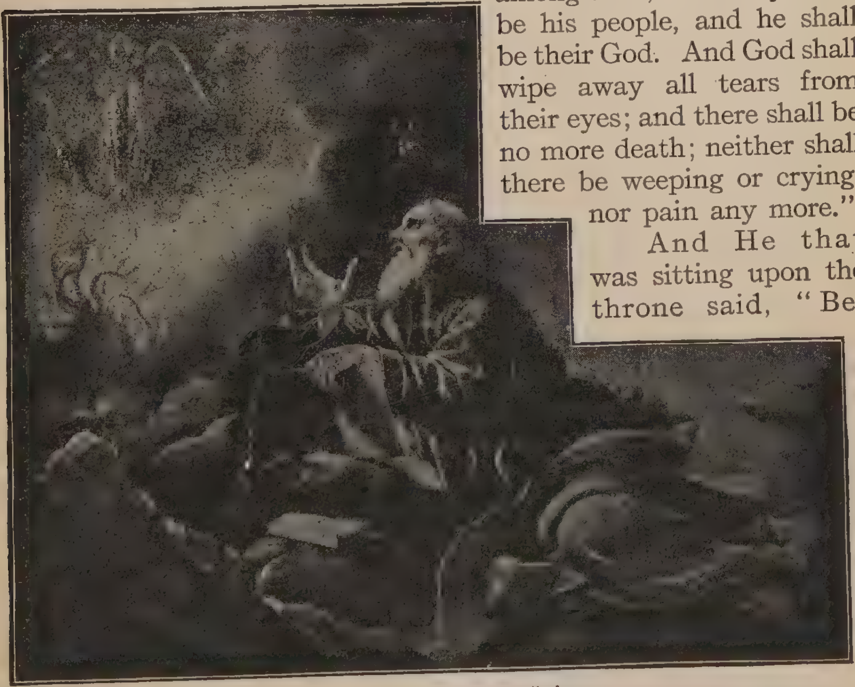
Then one of the elders spoke to Jŏhn, and said, "Who are these dressed in white robes? and whence did they come?"

And Jŏhn answered, "My Lord, thou knowest who they are, and whence they came, but I do not know."

Then the elder said, "These are they who have come up out of great trouble and sorrow, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For that cause they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth upon the throne shall spread his tent over them. They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more, nor shall the heat of the sun strike upon them. But the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall lead them as a shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

After this, Jŏhn heard a great voice out of the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men; and God shall dwell among men, and they shall be his people, and he shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither shall there be weeping or crying, nor pain any more."

And He that was sitting upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. I will give to him who is thirsty of the fountain of the water of life freely."



JŎHN ON THE ISLE OF PĂT'MOS.

Then Jŏhn seemed to be standing upon a great and high mountain; and he saw a glorious city, the new Jĕ-ru̥'să-lĕm, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Over the city was a rich light, like that which glows in some precious stone, clear as crystal. Around the city was a lofty wall, and on each side of the wall were three gates; for the city was four-square, having twelve gates in all. Beside each gate stood an angel, and on the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Ĭṣ′ra-el. And the wall had twelve foundations, and on them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lord. The wall was like jasper, and the city was built of pure gold, but a gold which seemed clear like glass. The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was one great pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, as clear as glass.

Jŏhn could see no Temple in the city, and it needs none; for the Lord God and Jē′ṣus Chrīst the Lamb of God are its Temple. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb of God is as a lamp in it. And the gates of the city shall not be shut by day, for there shall be no night there.

And the nations of men shall walk in the light of this city, and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it; and all the honor and glory of the nations of earth shall be brought into it. And into it shall never come anything that is evil, or unclean, or any one who does what God hates, or any one who makes a lie. But they only shall come into it whose names are written in the Lord's book.

And Jŏhn saw a river of water of life, clear as crystal, coming forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and flowing through the street of the city. On each side of the river was growing the tree of life, bearing its fruit every month, twelve times in the year; and the leaves of the tree were to heal all people of their diseases. And in the city the Lord God and the Lamb shall reign as kings.

When Jŏhn had seen and heard all these things, he fell down to worship the angel who had showed them to him. But the angel said to him, "Do not worship me, for I am a fellow-servant with you, and with your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the word of the book: worship God."

And the angel said to Jŏhn, "Do not seal up the words of what you have heard and seen, but tell them to all men. And the Spirit and the bride, the Church of Chrīst, say 'Come.' And let him that hears say 'Come.' And let him that is thirsty come; and whoever will let him take the water of life freely."

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

Index

AARON, brother of Moses, 125
  before Pharaoh, 126
  makes a golden calf, 143
  made priest, 155
Abdon, Judge of Israel, 232
Abel, birth of, 38
  slain by Cain, 39
Abiathar, the High-Priest, 296
Abihu, son of Aaron, 156
Abijah, becomes King of Judah, 422
Abimelech, son of Gideon, 228
Abishai, follower of David, 298
Abner, chief of Saul's army, 299
Abram, the Lord speaks with, 50
  of Ur, goes forth, 50–54
  and the King of Sodom, 56
  becomes Abraham, 60
  with Isaac on Mount Moriah, 68–71
  seeks wife for Isaac, 72
  death of, 76
Absalom, steals the Kingdom from David, 320–326
  the death of, 329
Achan, sin of, 195
Achish, King of the Philistines, 300
Adam, creation of, 34
  death of, 40
Adonijah, son of David, 338
Adullam, the Cave of, 294
Ahab, King of Israel, 364
  and his vineyard, 378–380
Ahaz, twelfth King of Judah, 432
Ahaziah, son of Ahab, King of Israel, 384
Ahijah, the prophet, 349
Ahimelech, the priest, 293
Ai, the city of, 195
Amalekites, the, 274–276
Amaziah, ninth King of Judah, 430
Ammon, son of David, slain by Absalom, 320
Amon, fifteenth King of Judah, 442
Amorites, defeated by Moses, 168
Ananias of Jerusalem, 679
Ananias of Damascus, 690
Andrew, the disciple, 528
Apostles' feet, Jesus washes the, 637
Araunah, and the threshing floor, 336
Ararat, Mount, and the Ark, 47
Ark of the Lord, the, David carries to Mount Zion, 311–312
Ark, the, of Noah, 43–46
Asa becomes King of Judah, 422
Asenath, wife of Joseph, 102
Asherah, the idol, 213
Athaliah becomes Queen of Judah, 426
  killed, 428
Atonement, Day of, 158
Avenger of Blood, the, 205–207

BAAL, the idol, 213
Baasha, the servant of Nadab, 361
  becomes king, 362
Babel, Tower of, 48–49
Babylon, ancient city, 49
  Nebuchadnezzar, King of, 449
  Jewish captives in, 445
Balaam, and the angel, 169–175
Balak, King of the Moabites, 170
Barak, 216
Bath-sheba and David, 316
Benaiah, Solomon's commander, 342
Ben-hadad, King of Syria, 376
Belshazzar, and the writing upon the wall, 465–468
Benjamin, son of Jacob, 90
  story of, 90–110

Bethuel, father of Rebekah, 74
Bildad, 183
Boaz, 248

CALEB, spies out the land, 161
  conquers Hebron, 202–203
Cain, birth of, 38
  slays Abel, 39
Caiaphas, Jesus before, 645
Calf, the golden, 143–146
Canaanites, the, 53
Canaan, the land of, spied out, 161–164
Chilion, son of Elimelech, 245
Commandments, the Ten, 141–142
Covenant, Ark of the, 150
Creation, story of, 33–35
Crucifixion of Jesus, the, 653
Cyrus, King of Persia, 473

DANIEL, the prophet, 452
  and his friends, 454–458
  in the den of lions, 469–472
Darius, King of Persia, 481
David, birth of, 194
  son of Jesse, anointed by Samuel, 279
  plays before Saul, 281
  slays Goliath, 282–285
  gets the giant's sword, 293
  spares Saul, 297–300
  Song of the Bow, 307
  made king of tribe of Judah, 308
  made king of the twelve tribes of Israel, 310
  and the Fifty-first Psalm, 319
  secures the throne again, 333
  sees the angel with a sword, 334–337
  death of, 339
Deborah, Song of, 219
  one of Israel's judges, 216
Delilah wins Samson's secret, 237
Desert, Israelites in, 139–142
Disciples, twelve chosen, 556
Disciples, Jesus chooses seventy, 600
Doeg, the Edomite, 295
Dream, Jacob's, 83–86

EDEN, Garden of, 34
Edomites, the, 167
Egyptians, the, drowned in the Red Sea, 135–138
Ehud, of the Tribe of Benjamin, 214
Elah, son of Baasha, 362
Eleazar, son of Aaron, 157
Eliab, son of Jesse, 278
Eli, fourteenth Judge of Israel, 250–256
Eliezar, servant of Abraham, 72–76
Elijah, the prophet, comes from Gilead, 364
  raises a boy to life, 366
  and Ahab, 378–380
  hears the voice, 372–375
  prayer of, answered by fire, 367–371
  and chariot of fire, 384–386
Elimelech, of the tribe of Judah, 245
Eliphaz, 183
Elisha, follows Elijah, 375
  and the pot of oil, 390
  and the pot of poison, 391
  and the woman of Shunem, 393
  and the chariots of fire, 399–400
  death of, 411
Elkanah, of Ramah, 250
Elon, Judge of Israel, 232
Enoch, son of Cain, 40
Enoch taken from earth, 42
Ephraim, son of Joseph, 103
Esau, goes to Edom, 89
  sells his birthright, 76–82
Esther, Queen of Persia, 481–491
Eve, creation of, 35
Ezekiel, the prophet, 452–454
Ezra writes the Old Testament, 491–494
Ezra and his Bible class, 500–502

FISHERMEN, Parable of the, 567
Fleece, Gideon and the, 223
Flood, the, 44–45
Fool, Parable of the Rich, 607
Fruit, forbidden, 36

GAD, the prophet, 335
Galeed, the covenant, 87

Gaza, the gates of, 237
Gehazi, servant of Elisha, 393
Gethsemane, Jesus goes to, 641
Gibeon, the city of, 198
Gideon, and the angel, 221
    and his three hundred, 226
Gilead, 327
Goats, Parable of the Sheep and the, 634
Goliath, the giant, 282–285

HAGAR, 65–68
Haman and Mordecai, 481–491
Ham, son of Noah, 42
Hannah, mother of Samuel, 250
Haran, brother of Abram, 51
Hebron, city of, 71
Herod, Jesus before, 649
Herodias, 576
Hezekiah, King of Judah, 436–440
Hivites, the, 198
Holy of Holies, 480
Huldah, the prophetess, 443

IBZAN, Judge of Israel, 232
Isaac, son of Abraham, 61, 66
    on Mount Moriah, 68–71
    blesses Jacob, 80–81
Isaiah, the prophet, 434
Ish-bosheth, son of Saul, 308
Ishmael, 65–68
Israelites descended from Jacob, 89
    leave Egypt, 132
Ithamar, son of Aaron, 157
Ittai, and his soldiers, 322

JABIN, King of Canaan, 215
Jacob, and the mess of pottage, 76
    and his dream, 83–86
    is deceived into marrying Leah, 85
    wrestles with the angel, 88
    meets Rachel, 85–86
    named Israel by the angel, 88
    makes peace with Esau, 89
    comes to Egypt, 112–116
    death of, 114
Jael, slays Sisera, 218
Jair, the eighth Judge of Israel, 223
James, the disciple, 556
Japheth, son of Noah, 42
Jebusites, a Canaanite tribe, 310
Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, 445
Jehoram, son of Ahab, 387
Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, 381
Jehu, and his chariot, 404–410
Jephthah, sets Israel free, 228
    promise of, 229
Jeremiah, the prophet, 446–450
Jericho, the fall of, 193–194
Jeroboam, of the Tribe of Ephraim, 349, 355
Jeroboam, death of, 361
Jerusalem, return of the Jews to, 473–476
    Jesus goes to, 520
    Jesus rides into, again, 624
Jerusalem, wall of, 495, 499
Jesse, son of Obed, 250
Jesus, a descendant of Abram, 50
Jesus is born, 511
    brought to Nazareth, 517
    goes to Jerusalem, 520
    baptized by John, 524
    tempted by evil, 525
    changes the water to wine, 530
    and the Samaritans, 537
    heals the nobleman's son, 538
    heals Peter's wife's mother, 544
    heals leprosy, 547
    heals a palsied man, 549
    heals a man on the Sabbath, 550
    and the Sermon on the Mount, 556
    chooses twelve disciples, 556
    heals the centurion's servant, 560
    and the widow's son, 562
    stills the tempest, 568
    and the evil spirits, 569, 584, 590
    raises Jairus' daughter to life, 572
    feeds the multitude, 578, 585
    heals the deaf, 585
    heals the blind, 586
    rebukes Peter, 587
    goes to Jerusalem, 594
    chooses seventy disciples, 600

Jesus raises Lazarus, 604
  goes to Perea, 606
  rides into Jerusalem, 624
  cleanses the temple, 627
  eats the Passover, 637
  washes the apostles' feet, 637
  institutes the Lord's Supper, 636
  goes to Gethsemane, 641
  brought before Caiaphas, 645
  brought before Pilate, 646
  brought before Herod, 649
  scourged, 650
  is mocked, 652
  is crucified, 653
  laid in the sepulchre, 656
  rises on the third day, 658
  appears to the women, 658
  appears to the disciples, 660
  ascends to heaven, 670
Jezebel, wife of Ahab, 364
Joab, David's general, 316
  speaks to David, 331
Joash, King of Israel, 412
Job, The story of, 180–184
John, the disciple, 528
  sees the throne of God, 746, 750
John, the Baptist, is born, 508
  baptizes Jesus, 524
  his words to the people, 522–524
  thrown into prison, 534
  beheaded, 576
Jonathan, son of Saul, 270–273
  and the arrows, 291
Jonah, story of, 412–415
Jordan, the River, dry, 190–191
Joseph, son of Jacob, 90
  sold into bondage, 90–95
  before Pharaoh, 99
  made ruler of Egypt, 100
  finds Benjamin, 106–112
  brings Jacob to Pharaoh, 113
  death of, 116
  dream comes true, 102–106
Joshua, the helper of Moses, 161
  reading God's Law, 97
  conquers Canaan, 198–201
  death of, 211–212
Josiah, fifteenth King of Judah, 442
Judah, son of Jacob, 94
Judge, Parable of the Unjust, 615

KISH, father of Saul, 261

LABAN, brother of Rebekah, 74
Lamb, the prophet's story of the little, 317
Lazarus, raised by Jesus, 604
Lazarus, Parable of, and the Rich Man, 613
Leah, wife of Jacob, 85
Leaven, or Yeast, Parable of the, 566
Lebbeus, the disciple, 556
Leper, the, and the slave girl, 395–399
Lepers, the, visit the Syrians, 401–403
Leprosy, Jesus heals, 547
Lord's Supper, Jesus institutes the, 636
Lot, nephew of Abram, 51
  and the angels, 61–65

MACHPELAH, Cave of, 71
Mahlon, son of Elimelech, 245
Manasseh, fourteenth King of Judah, 441
Manasseh, son of Joseph, 102
Manna, the bread from Heaven, 137
Manoah, of Dan, 232
Marah, the place of bitterness, 137
Matthew, the disciple, 556
Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, 468
Mephibosheth, the lame, son of Jonathan, 314
Merab, daughter of Saul, 287
Merchant, Parable of the, 567
Methuselah, son of Enoch, 42
Micah, and the Idol Temple, 241–244
Micaiah, the prophet, 382
Michal, daughter of Saul, wife of David, 288
Midianites, the, 220
Midianite, the, and his dream, 225
Miracle, of the water and the wine, 530
  of healing the nobleman's son, 538
  of healing leprosy, 547
  of healing the palsied man, 549

Miracle, of the man healed on the Sabbath, 550
  of healing the centurion's servant, 560
  of Jesus and the widow's son, 562
  of the tempest that was stilled, 568
  of Jesus raising Jairus' daughter, 572
  of the multitudes that were fed, 578, 585
  of healing the deaf, 585
  of healing the blind, 586
  of raising Lazarus, 604
  of the Resurrection, 658
  of the Ascension, 670
Missionaries, early, 703–708
Mizpah, the covenant, 87
Moabites, descendants of Lot, 169–170
  Israel victorious over the, 387–389
Money, Parable of the Lost Piece of, 610
Mordecai and Haman, 481–491
Moriah, Mount, 68–71
Moses, found floating on the Nile, 116
  the Israelite boy, 120
  goes to Midian, 121
  hears the voice of God, 121–126
  sees burning bush, 122
  goes before Pharaoh, 126
  and the serpent, 168
  and the promised land, 176
  death of, 179
  and the plagues, 126–130
  takes the Israelites from Egypt, 132–133
  book of, found, 443
Mustard Seed, Parable of the, 566

NAAMAN, general of the Syrian army, 395
Naboth, 378
Nadab, son of Aaron, 156
Nadab, son of Jeroboam, 361
Nahash, King of the Ammonites, 267
Nahor, brother of Abram, 51
Naomi, wife of Elimelech, 245–250
Nathan, the prophet, 312
Nathanael, the disciple, 556
Nazareth, Jesus brought to, 517
Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, 447
  and the golden image, 459–461
  and the tree that was cut down, 462–465
Nehemiah, the cup-bearer, 495–499
Nineveh, Jonah and, 414
Noah, and the ark, 42–46

OBADIAH, 367
Obed, son of Ruth, 250
Og, King of the Giants, 169
Omri, King of Israel, 362
Oreb, Prince of the Midianites, 226
Orpah, of Moab, 245
Othniel, the first Judge of Israel, 214

PARABLE, of the sower, 564
  of the tares, 566
  of the mustard seed, 566
  of the leaven, or yeast, 566
  of the merchant seeking pearls, 567
  of the fishermen, 567
  of the unkind servant, 592
  of the good shepherd, 600
  of the good Samaritan, 602
  of the rich fool, 607
  of the lost sheep, 610
  of the lost piece of money, 610
  of the prodigal son, 610
  of the rich man and Lazarus, 613
  of the unjust steward, 614
  of the unjust judge, 615
  of the Pharisee and the publican, 615
  of the pounds, 620
  of the wedding feast, 629
  of the ten young women, 633
  of the sheep and the goats, 634
Paradise, see Eden, 34
Passover, The Feast of the, 208
  Jesus eats the, 637
Paul, second journey of, 709
  words of, on the hill, 713–716
  last journey of, to Jerusalem, 723–726

Paul, journey of, to Rome, 742
  in the castle, 729, 730
  at Corinth, 716–718
  at Ephesus, 719–722
  the plot to kill, 731
  before Agrippa, 734–737
  in the storm, 738–742
Peter denies Christ, 644
  meets John on the shore, 666
  raises the lame man, 676
  before the rulers, 677
  and the vision, 695–699
  and the iron gate, 700–702
Pharaoh, King of Egypt, 95–102
  sends the Israelites from Egypt, 132
Pharisee and Publican, Parable of, 615
Philip, the disciple, 556
Philistines, defeated at Ebenezer, 258
Philistines, the, 215
  capture the ark of the covenant, 154–256
Phinehas, son of Eleazar, 210
Pilate, Jesus before, 646
Plagues, of Egypt, 126–130
Pounds, Parable of the, 620
Prodigal Son, Parable of the, 610
Prophet, of Judah, death of the, 359–361
Publican, and Pharisee, Parable of the 615

RACHEL, at the well, 85
  tomb of, 90
Rahab, saves the spies, 188
Rebekah, at the well, 73
  becomes the wife of Isaac, 75
Rehoboam, son of Solomon, 353
Reuben, son of Jacob, 93
Ruth, story of, 245–250

SABBATH, Jesus heals on the, 550
Salmon, of the Tribe of Judah, marries Rahab, 194
Samaria, City of, founded, 362
Samaritan, the good, 602
Samaritans, Jesus and the, 537
Samson, the Nazarite, story of, 232–240
Samuel, son of Hannah, 250–254
  last of the judges chooses a king, 260–264
Sarai, wife of Abram, 51
Saul, is anointed king, 262
  and the men of Jabesh, 267–269
  disobeys God, 274–276
  seeks to have David slain, 287
  has the priests slain, 296
  his last days, 300–305
  the young man, hears a voice, 689–694
Scapegoat, the, in the wilderness, 158–160
Sermon on the Mount, 556
Serpent, Brazen, 168
Servant, Parable of the Unkind, 592
Seth, son of Adam and Eve, 40
Shammah, son of Jesse, 279
Sheba, the Queen of, 348
Shechem, the city of, 196
Sheep, Parable of the Lost, 610
Sheep, Parable of the, and the Goats, 634
Shem, son of Noah, 42
Shepherd, Parable of the Good, 600
Shepherd Psalm, of David, 280
Shiloh, the city of, 208
Sihon, death of, King of the Amorites, 169
Simeon, brother of Joseph, made prisoner, 105
  the aged, sees Jesus, 512
Simon Peter, the disciple, 528
Sinai, Mount, 140
Sisera, slain by Jael, 215–219
Snake of the Garden of Eden, 36–37
Sodom and Gomorrah, 63
Solomon, son of David, birth of, 319
  on David's throne, 337–339
  shows his wisdom, 340–343
  the last days of his reign, 346–356
Sower, Parable of the, 564
Spies, the two, Caleb and Joshua 188–189
Stephen, story of, 683
Steward, Parable of the Unjust, 614

TABERNACLE, the, 147–155
Tables of stone, Moses brings the, 145
Tares, Parable of the, 566
Temple, first, on Mount Moriah, 343–346
    the new, on Mount Moriah, 477–480
    Jesus cleanses the, 627
Ten Tribes, how lost, 416
Terah, father of Abram, 51
Thomas, the disciple, 556
Tola, the seventh Judge of Israel, 228

URIAH, husband of Bath-sheba, 316
Uzza, and the ark, 311
Uzziah, tenth King of Judah, 431
    smitten with leprosy, 432

VIRGINS, Parable of the, 633

WEDDING Feast, Parable of the, 629
Wilderness, Israelites return to the, 165–169
Women, the Ten Young, Parable of, 633

XERXES, King of Persia, 481

YEAST, or Leaven, Parable of the, 566

ZACHARIAS, 506
Zalmunna, King of the Midianites, 227
Zebah, King of the Midianites, 227
Zeeb, Prince of the Midianites, 226
Ziba, servant of Saul, 313
Zimri, king for seven days, 362
Zophar, 183

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

BS 551 .H8 1920

Hurlbut, Jesse Lyman, 1843-
1930.

Hurlbut's story of the
Bible

DEMCO